

THE  
VVISDOME  
OF THE  
A N C I E N T S.

Written in *Latine* by the  
Right Honorable Sir *Francis*  
*BACON* Knight, Baron of *Verulam*  
and Lord Chancellor of

England.

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Done into English by Sir, *Arthur Gorges*  
K N I G H T.

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*Sentum invincibile fides.*

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## The P R E F A C E.

**T**H E Antiquities of the first age ( except those we find in sacred Writ ) were buried in oblivion and silence : silence was succeeded by Poetical Fables ; and Fables again were followed by the Records we now enjoy. So that the mysteries and secrets of Antiquity were distinguished and separated from the Records and Evidences of succeeding times by the vail of fiction, which interposed it self and came between those things which perished, and those which are extant. I suppose some are of opinion, that my purpose is to write toys and trifles, and to usurpe the same liberty in applying, that the Poets assumed in faining, which I might do ( I confesse ) if I listed, and with more serious contemplation intermix these things, to delight either my self in meditation, or others in reading. Neither am I ignorant how fickle and inconstant a thing fiction is, as being subject to be drawn and wrested any way, and how great

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*the commodity of wit and discourse is, that is able to apply things well, yet so as never meant by the first Authors. But I remember that this liberty hath been lately much abused, in that many, to purchase the reverence of Antiquity to their own inventions and fancies, have for the same intent laboured to wrest many Poetical Fables: Neither hath this old and common vanity been used only of late or now and then: for even Crisippus long ago did (as an interpreter of dreams) ascribe the opinions of the Stoicks to the antient Poets; and more sottishly do the Chymicks appropriate the fancies and delights of Poets in the transformations of bodies, to the experiments of their furnace. All these things, I say, I have sufficiently considered and weighed, and in them have seen and noted the general levity and indulgence of mens wits above Allegories. And yet for all this I relinquish not my opinion. For first it may not be, that the folly and looseness of a few should altogether detract from the respect due to the Parables: for that were a conceit which might*  
favour

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savour of prophanesse and presumption: for Religion it self doth sometimes delight in such vails and shadows: so that who so exempts them, seems in a manner to interdict all commerce between things divine and humane. But concerning humane wisdom, I do indeed ingeniously and freely confesse, that I am enclined to imagine, that under some of the ancient fictions lay couched certain mysteries and Allegories, even from their first invention. And I am perswaded (whether ravished with the reverence of Antiquity, or because in some Fables I find such singular proportion between the similitude and the thing signified; and such apt and clear coherence in the very structure of them, and propriety of names wherewith the persons or actors in them are inscribed and intituled) that no man can constantly deny, but this sence was in the Authors intent and meaning, when they first invented them, and that they purposely shadowed it in this sort: For who can be so stupid and blind in the open light, as (when he hears how Fame, after

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*the Gyants were destroyed, sprang up as their youngest sister) not to refer it to the murmurs and seditious reports of both sides, which are wont to flie abroad for a time after the suppressing of insurrections? Or when he hears how the Gyant Typhon having cut out and brought away Jupiters nerves, which Mercury stole from him, and restored again to Jupiter; doth not presently perceive how fitly it may be applied to powerfull rebellions, which take from Princes their sinews of money & authority, but so, that by affability of speech, and wise edicts (the minds of their subjects being in time privily and as it were by stealth reconciled) they recover their strength again? Or when he hears how (in that memorable expedition of the gods against the Gyants) the braying of Silenus his Asse, conduced much to the profligation of the Gyants, doth not confidently imagine that it was invented to shew, how the greatest enterprises of Rebels are oftentimes dispersed with vain rumors and fears.*

*More-*

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Moreover, to what judgement can the conformity and signification of Names seem obscure? Seeing Metis the wife of Jupiter doth plainly signifie counsell: Typhon, insurrection; Pan, universality; Nemesis, revenge, and the like. Neither let it trouble any man, if sometimes he meet with Historical narrations, or additions for ornaments sake, or confusion of times, or something transferred from one Fable to another, to bring in a new Allegory: for it could be no otherwise, seeing they were the inventions of men, which lived in divers ages, and had also divers ends: some being ancient, others neoterical: some having an eye to things natural, others to moral.

There is another argument, and that no small one neither, to prove that these Fables contain certain hidden and involved meanings, seeing some of them are observed to be so absurd and foolish in the very relation that they shew, and as it were proclaim a parable as far off: for such tales as are probable, they may seem to be invented

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for delight, and in imitation of History. And as for such as no man would so much as imagine or relate, they seem to be sought out for other ends: For what kind of fiction is that, wherein Jupiter is said to have taken Metis to wife, and, perceiving that she was with child, to have devoured her, whence himself conceiving, brought forth Pallas armed out of his head? Truly I think there was never dream (so different to the course of cogitation, and so full of monstrosity) ever hatcht in the brain of man. Above all things this prevails most with me, and is of singular moment, many of these Fables seem not to be invented of those by whom they are related and celebrated, as by Homer, Hesiod, and others: for if it were so, that they took beginning in that age, and from those Authors by whom they are delivered and brought to our hands; My mind gives me there could be no great or high matter expected, or supposed to proceed from them in respect of these Originals. But if with attention we consider the matter, it will appear

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appear that they were delivered and related as things formerly believed and received, and not as newly invented and offered unto us. Besides, seeing they are diversly related by Writers that lived near about one and the self same-time, we may easily perceive that they were common things, derived from precedent memorials; and that they became various by reason of the divers ornaments bestowed on them by particular relations. And the consideration of this must needs encrease in us a great opinion of them, as not to be accounted either the effects of the times or inventions of the Poets; but as sacred reliques or abstracted ayres of better times, which by tradition from more ancient Nations fell into the Trumpets and Flutes of the Grecians. But if any do obstinately contend, that Allegories are alwaies adventitious, and as it were by constraint, never naturally and properly included in Fables, we will not be much troublesome, but suffer them to enjoy that gravity of judgement which I am sure they effect, although indeed it be



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*but lumpish and almost leaden. And (if they be worthy to be taken notice of) we will begin a fresh with them in some other fashion.*

*There is found among men ( and it goes for currant ) a twofold use of Parables , and those ( which is more to be admired ) referred to contrary ends ; conducing as well to the foulding up, and keeping of things under a vail, as to the enlightning and laying open of obscurities. But omitting the former, ( rather than to undergo wrangling, and assuming auncient Fables as things vagrant and composed only for delight ) the latter must questionless still remain as not to be wrested from us by any violence of wit, neither can any ( that is but meanly learned ) hinder, but it must absolutely be received, as a thing grave and sober, free from all vanity, and exceeding profitable and necessary to all Sciences. This is it, I say, that leads the understanding of man by an easie and gentle passage through all novell & abstruse inventions, which any way differ from common  
received*



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received opinions. Therefore in the first ages ( when many humane inventions and conclusions, which are now common and vulgar, were new and not generally known ) allthings were full of Fables, æ-nigmaes, parables, and similes of all sorts: by which they sought to teach and lay open, not to hide and conceal knowledge, especially, seeing the understandings of men were in those times rude and impatient, and almost incapable of any subtilties, such things only excepted, as were the objects of sense : for as Hieroglyphicks preceded letters, so parables were more ancient than Arguments. And in these days also, he that would illuminate mens minds anew in any old matter, and that not with disprofit and harshnesse, must absolutely take the same course, and use the help of similes. Wherefore all that hath been said, we will thus conclude : The wisdom of the Ancients , it was either much, or happy ; Much, if these figures and tropes were invented by study and premeditation ; Happy, if they ( intending nothing

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thing lesse ) gave matter and occasion to so many worthy meditations. As concerning my labours ( if there be any thing in them which may do good ) I will on neither part count them ill bestowed, my purpose being to illustrate either Antiquity, or things themselves. Neither am I ignorant that this very Subject hath been attempted by others : But to speak as I think, and that freely without ostentation, the dignity and efficacy of the thing is almost lost by these mens writings, though voluminous and full of pains, whilst not diving into the depth of matters, but skilfull only in certain common places, have applyed the sense of these Parables to certain vulgar and general things, not so much as glancing at their true vertue, genuine propriety, and full depth. ( I if I be not deceived ) shall be new in common things. Wherefore leaving such as are plain and open, I will aim at further and richer matters.

The



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TO

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## To the BOOK.

**R**ich Mine of Art, Minion of Mer-  
cury;  
True Truch-man of the mind of  
Mysterie:

Inventions Store-house; Nymph of He-  
licon:

Deep Moralist of Time Tradition.

Unto this Paragon of Brutus race  
Present thy service, and with cheerfull  
grace

Say (if Pythagoras believ'd may be)  
The soul of Ancient Wisdome lives  
in Thee.



# THE WISDOM OF THE ANCIENTS.

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*CASSANDRA, or Divination.*

**T**He Poets fable that *Apollo* being enamoured of *Cassandra*, was by her many shifts and cunning sleights still deluded in his desire; but yet sed on with hope untill such time as she had drawn from him the gift of prophesying; and having by such her dissimulation in the end; attained to that which from the beginning she sought after; at last flatly rejected his suite. Who finding himself so far engaged in his promise, as that he could not by any

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means revoke again his rash gift, and yet enflamed with an earnest desire of revenge, highly disdaining to be made the scorn of a crafty wench, annexed a penalty to his promise, to wit, that she should ever foretell the truth, but never be believed: So were her divinations always faithfull, but at no time regarded, whereof she still found the experience, yea even in the ruine of her own countrey, which she had often forewarned them of, but they neither gave credit nor care to her words. This Fable seems to intimate the unprofitable liberty of untimely admonitions and counsels. For they that are so over-weened with the sharpness and dexterity of their own wit and capacity, as that they disdain to submit themselves to the documents of *Apello*, the God of Harmony, whereby to learn and observe the method and measure of affairs, the grace and gravity of discourse, the differences between the more judicious and more vulgar ears, and the due times when to speak and when to be silent: Be they never so sensible and pregnant, and their judgements never so profound and profitable, yet in all their endeavours either of perswasion or perforce, they avail nothing, neither are they of any moment to advantage or manage matters, but do rather hasten on the ruine of all those that they



they adhere or devote themselves unto. And then at last when calamity hath made men feel the event of neglect, then shall they too late be revered as deep foreseeing and faithfull Prophets. Whereof a notable instance is eminently set forth in *Marcus Cato Unicus*, who as from a watch-tower discovered a far off, and as an Oracle long foretold, the approaching ruine of his Countrey, and the plotted tyranny hovering over the State, both in the first conspiracy, and as it was prosecuted in the civil contention between *Cæsar* and *Pompey*, and did no good the while, but rather harmed the common-wealth, and hastened on his Countreys bane, which *M. Cicero* wisely observed, and writing to a familiar friend doth in these terms excellently describe, *Cato opinio sentit, sed non interdum Republicæ: loquitur enim tanquam in Republica Platonis, non tanquam in facta Republica*. *Cato* (saith he) judgeth profoundly, but in the mean time damnifies the State, for he speaks as in the common-wealth of *Plato*, and not as in the dress of *Romulus*.

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*T I P H O N, or a Rebell.*

**J**U<sup>no</sup> being vexed ( say the Poets ) that *Jupiter* had begotten *Pallas* by himself without her, earnestly pressed all the other Gods and Goddesses that she might also bring forth of her self alone without him; and having by violence and importunity obtained a grant thereof, she smote the earth, and forthwith sprang up *Typhon* a huge and horrid monster: This strange birth she commits to a Serpent ( as a Foster father ) to nourish it; who no sooner came to ripeness of years, but he provokes *Jupiter* to battel. In the conflict, the Gyant getting the upper hand, takes *Jupiter* upon his shoulders, carries him into a remote and obscure countrey, and ( cutting out the sinews of his hands and feet ) brought them away, and so left him miserably mangled and maymed. But *Mercury* recovering these nerves from *Typhon* by stealth, restored them again to *Jupiter*. *Jupiter* being again by this means corroborated, assaults the Monster afresh, and at the first strikes him with a thunder-bolt, from whose blood serpents were ingendred. This Monster at length fainting and flying, *Jupiter* casts on him the mount

*Ætna,*

*Aetna*, and with the weight thereof crush him.

This Fable seems to point at the variable fortune of Princes, and the rebellious insurrection of Traytors in a State. For Princes may well be said to be married to their dominions, as *Jupiter* was to *Juno*: but it happens now an then, that being deboshed by the long custome of empyring and bending towards tyranny, they endeavor to draw all to themselves, and (contemning the counsell of their Nobles and Senators) hatch laws in their own brain, that is, dispose of things by their own fancy and absolute power. The people (repining at this) study how to create and set up a chief of their own choise. This project by the secret instigation of the Peers and Nobles, doth for the most part take his beginning; by whose connivence the Commons being set on edge, there follows a kind of murmuring or discontent in the State, shadowed by the infancy of *Typhon*, which being nursed by the naturall pravity and clownish malignity of the vulgar sort (unto Princes as infectious as Serpents) is again repaired by renewed strength, and at last breaks out into open Rebellion, which (because it brings infinite mischiefs upon Prince and people) is represented by the monstrous deformity of

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*Typhon* : his hundred heads signifie their divided powers ; his fiery mouths their inflamed intents ; his serpentine circles their pestilent malice in besieging ; his iron hands, their merciless slaughters ; his Eagles talents, their greedy rapines ; his plumed body, their continual rumors and scouts, and fears, and such like. and sometimes these rebellions grow so potent, that Princes are inforced (transported as it were by the Rebels, and forsaking the chief Seats and Cities of the Kingdome) to contract their power, and (being deprived of the finewes of money and majesty) betake themselves to some remote and obscure corner within their dominions : but in proceffe of time (if they bear their misfortunes with moderation) they may recover their strength by the virtue and industry of *Mercury*, that is, they may (by becoming affable, and by reconciling the minds and wills of their Subjects with grave edicts and gracious speech) excite an alacrity to grant ayds and subsidies whereby to strengthen their authority anew. Neverthelesse having learned to be wise and wary, they will refrain to try the chance of Fortune by war, and yet study how to suppress the reputation of the Rebels by some famous action, which if it fall out answerable to their expectation,

the

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the Rebels finding themselves weakned, and fearing the successe of their broken projects; betake themselves to some sleight and vain bravadoes, like the hissing of serpents, and at length in despair betake themselves to flight, and then when they begin to break, it is safe and timely for Kings to pursue and oppress them with the forces and weight of the kingdome, as it were with the mountain *Aetna*.

### *The Cyclops, or the Ministers of Terror.*

**T**hey say that the *Cyclops* (for their fierceness and cruelty) were by *Jupiter* cast into hell, and there doomed to perpetual imprisonment: but *Tellus* perswaded *Jupiter* that it would do well, if being set at liberty, they were put to forge thunder-boulds, which being done accordingly, they became so painfull and industrious, as that day and night they continued hammering out in laborious diligence thunder-boulds, and other instruments of terrour. In proceſs of time *Jupiter* having conceived a displeasure against *Aesculapius* the son of *Apollo*, for restoring a dead man to life by Physick: and concealing his dislike (because there was no just cause of anger, the

deed being pious and famous) secretly incens'd the *Cyclopes* against him, who without delay flew him with a thunder-bolt: In revenge of which act; *Apollo* (*Jupiter* not prohibiting it) shot them to death with his arrows.

This Fable may be applied to the projects of Kings, who having cruell, bloody, and exacting Officers, do first punish and displace them; afterwards by the counsell of *Tellus*, that is of some base and ignoble person, and by the prevailing respect of profit they admit them into their places again, that they may have instruments in a readiness, if at any time there should need either severity of execution, or acerbity of exaction. These servile creatures being by nature cruell, and by their former fortune exasperated, and perceiving well what is expected at their hands, do shew themselves wonderfull officious in such kind of imployments; but being too rash and precipitate in seeking countenance and creeping into favour, do sometimes take occasion from the secret becknings and ambiguous commands of their Prince to performe some hatefull execution. But Princes (abhorring the fact, and knowing well that they shall never want such kind of instruments) do utterly forsake them, turning them over to the friends  
and

and allies of the wronged to their accusations and revenge, and to the generall hatred of the people; so that with great applause and prosperous wishes and exclamations towards the Prince, they are brought, rather too late than undeservedly, to a miserable end.

*NARCISSEUS, or Self-Love.*

**T**hey say that *Narcissus* was exceeding fair and beautifull, but wonderfull proud and disdainfull; wherefore despising all others in respect of himself, he leads a solitary life in the woods and chases with a few followers, to whom he alone was all in all; among the rest there follows him the Nymph *Echo*. During his course of life it fatally so chanc't that he came to a clear fountain, upon the banck whereof he lay down to repose himself in the heat of the day. And having espied the shadow of his own face in the water, was so besotted and ravished with the contemplation and admiration thereof, that by no means possible he could be drawn from beholding his image in this Glasse; insomuch that, by continual gazing thereupon, he pined away to nothing, and was at last turned into a flower of his own name, which appears in



the beginning of the Spring, and is sacred to the infernall powers, *Pluto*, *Proserpina*, and the *Furies*.

This Fable seems to shew the dispositions and fortunes of those, who in respect either of their beauty or other gift wherewith they are adorned and graced by nature without the help of industry, are so far besotted in themselves as that they prove the cause of their own destruction. For it is the property of men infected with this humor not to come much abroad, or to be conversant in civill affairs, especially seeing those that are in publick place must of necessity encounter with many contempts and scorns, which may much deject and trouble their minds, and therefore they lead for the most part a solitary, private, and obscure life, attended on with a few followers, and those such as will adore and admire them, and like an *Escho* flatter them in all their sayings, and applaud them in all their words. So that being by this custome seduced and puffed up, and as it were stupified with the admiration of themselves, they are possessed with so strange a sloth and idleness, that they grow in a manner benum'd and defective of all vigor and alacrity. Elegantly doth this flower appearing in the beginning of the spring, represent the likenesse of these mens  
dis-



dispositions, who in their youth do flourish and waxe famous, but being come to ripeness of years, they deceive and frustrate the good hope that is conceived of them. Neither is it impertinent, that this flower is said to be consecrated to the infernal deities, because men of this disposition become unprofitable to all humane things. For whatsoever produceth no fruit of it self, but passeth and vanisheth as if it never had been, (like the way of a ship in the Sea) that the Ancients were wont to dedicate to the ghosts and powers below.

*STYX, or Leagues.*

**T**HE Oath by which the gods were wont to oblige themselves (when they meant to ratifie any thing so firmly as never to revoke it) is a thing well known to the vulgar, as being mentioned almost in every Fable, which was when they did not invoke or call to witnesse any celestial majesty or divine power, but only the River *Styx*, that with crooked and *Meandry* turnings incircleth the Palace of the infernal *Dis*. This was held as the only manner of their Sacrament, and besides it, not any other vow to be accounted firm and inviolable, and therefore the punishment

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nishment to be inflicted (if any did perjure themselves) was that for certain years they should be put out of commons, and not to be admitted to the table of the gods.

This Fable seems to point at the Leagues and Pacts of Princes, of which more truly than opportunely may be said, that be they never so strongly confirmed with the solemnity and religion of an oath, yet are for the most part of no validity; insomuch that they are made rather with an eye to reputation, and report and ceremony, than to faith, security and effect. Moreover add to these the bonds of affinity, as the Sacraments of nature, and the mutuall deserts of each part, and you shall observe, that with a great many, all these things are placed a degree under ambition and profit, & the licentious desire of domination: And so much the rather, because it is an easie thing for Princes to defend and cover their unlawful desires & unfaithful vows, with many outwardly seeming fair pretexts, especially seeing there is no Umpier or Moderator of matters concluded upon, to whom a reason should be tendred. Therefore there is no true and proper thing made choice of, for the confirmation of faith, and that no celestial power neither, but is indeed *Necessity* (a great God to great Potentates) the peril also of State, and

and the Communication of profit. As for Necessity it is elegantly represented by *Styx*, that fatal & irremeable river, and this God-head did *Iphicrates* the *Athenian* call to the confirmation of a League, who because he alone is found to speak plainly that which many hide covertly in their breasts, it would not be amiss to relate his words. He observing how the *Lacedemonians* had thought upon and propounded divers cautions, sanctions, confirmations, and bonds pertaining to Leagues, interposed thus; *Unum Lacedemonii, nobis vobiscum vinculum, & securitatis ratio esse possit, si plane demonstratis, vos ea nobis concessisse, & inter manus posuisse, ut vobis facultas ledendi nos si maxime velleis minime suppetere possit.* There is one thing (O *Lacedemonians*) that would link us unto you in the bond of amity, and be the occasion of peace and security, which is, if you would plainly demonstrate, that you have yielded up and put into our hands such things as that; would you hurt us never so fain, you should yet be disfurnished of means to do it. If therefore the power of hurting be taken away, or if by breach of league there follow the danger of the ruine or dimunition of the State or tribute; then indeed the leagues may seem to be ratified and established, and as it were confirmed

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firmed by the Sacrament of the *Stygian lake*; seeing that it includes the fear of prohibition, and suspension from the table of the gods, under which name the laws and prerogatives, the plenty and felicity of a kingdome were signified by the Ancients.

#### *P A N, or Nature.*

**T**HE Ancients have exquisitely described *Nature* under the person of *Pan*, whose original they leave doubtful; for some say that he was the son of *Mercury*; others attribute unto him a far different beginning, affirming him to be the common off-spring of *Penelope's* suitors, upon a suspicion, that every one of them had to do with her, which latter relation doubtless gave occasion to some after writers to intitle this ancient fable with the name of *Penelope*, a thing very frequent amongst them, when they apply old fictions to young persons and names, and that many times absurdly and indiscreetly, as may be seen here: For *Pan* being one of the ancient gods, was long before the time of *Ulysses* and *Penelope*. Besides (for her matronal chastity) she was held venerable by Antiquity. Neither may we pretermitt the third conceit of his birth: for some say that he was the son of *Jupiter*.

*Jupiter* and *Hybris*, which signifies contumely or disdain. But howsoever begotten, the *Parca* ( they say ) were his sisters. He is portrayed by the Ancients in this guise ; on his head a pair of horns that reach to heaven, his body rough and hairy, his beard long and shaggy, his shape biformed above like a man, below like a beast, his feet like Goats-hoofs, bearing these ensignes of his jurisdiction, to wit, in his left hand a Pipe of seven reeds, & in his right a sheep-hook, or a staffe crooked at the upper end, and his mantle made of a Leopards skin. His dignities and offices were these, He was the God of Hunters, of Shepheards, and of all Rurall Inhabitants : Chief President also of hills and mountains, and next to *Mercury* the Embassador of the Gods. Moreover he was accounted the leader and commander of the *Nymphs*, which were always wont to dance the rounds and frisk about him ; he was acosted by the *Satyrs* and the old *Sileni*. He had power also to strike men with terrors, and those especially vain and superstitious, which are termed *Panique* fears. His acts were not many, for ought that can be found in records, the chiefest was, that he challenged *Cupid* at wrestling, in which conflict he had the foil. The tale goes too, how that he caught the Giant *Typhon* in

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in a net, and held him fast. Moreover when *Ceres* (grumbling and chafing that *Proserpina* was ravished) had hid her self away, and that all the gods took pains (by dispersing themselves into every corner) to find her out, it was only his good hap (as he was hunting) to light on her, & acquaint the rest where she was. He presumed also to put it to the trial who was the best Musitian he or *Apollo*, and by the judgement of *Midas* was indeed preferred: But the wise Judge had a pair of Asses ears privily chopt to his Noddle for his sentence. Of his love-tricks, there is nothing reported, or at least not much, a thing to be wondred at, especially being among a troop of gods so profusely amorous. This only is said of him, that he loved the Nymph *Eccho* (whom he took to wife) and one pretty wench more called *Syrinx*, towards whom *Cupid* (in an angry and revengeful humor, because so audaciously he had challenged him at wrestling) inflamed his desire. Moreover he had no issue (which is a marvell also, seeing the gods, especially those of the Male-kind, were very generative) only he was the reputed father of a little girl called *Jambe*, that with many pretty tales was wont to make strangers merry; but some think that he did indeed beget her by his wife *Jambe*. This  
( if

( if any be ) is a noble tale, as being laid out and big-bellied with the secrets and mysteries of nature.

*Pan* ( as his name imports ) represents and lays open the All of things or Nature. Concerning his original there are two only opinions that go for currant ; for either he came of *Mercury*, that is, the word of God, which the holy Scriptures without all controverſie affirm, and ſuch of the Phyloſophers as had any ſmack of divinity aſſented unto ; or elſe from the confuſed ſeeds of things. For they that would have one ſimple beginning refer it unto God : or if a materiate beginning they would have it various in power. So that we may end the controverſie with this diſtribution, that the world tooke beginning either from *Mercury*, or from the ſeeds of all things.

Virg. Eclog. 6.

*Namque canebat uti magnum per inane  
coacta.*

*Semina, terrarumque, animaque maris-  
que fuiſſent.*

*Et liquidi ſimul ignis : & his exordia  
primis.*

*Omnia,*



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*Omnia, & ipse tener mundi concubitus  
Orbis.*

For rich-vain'd *Orpheus* sweetly did re-  
hearse

How that the seeds of Fire, Air, Water,  
Earth,

Were all packt in the vast void Uni-  
verse:

And how from these as firstlings all had  
birth,

And how the body of this Orbique  
frame,

From tender infancy to big became.

But as touching the third conceit of *Pans* O-  
riginal, it seems that the Grecians (either  
by intercourse with the Egyptians, or one  
way or other) had heard something of the  
Hebrew mysteries; for it points to the state  
of the world, not considered in immediate  
creation, but after the fall of *Adam*, exposed  
and made subject to death and corruption: for  
in that state it was (and remains to this day)  
the off-spring of God and Sin. And there-  
fore all these three narrations, concerning the  
manner of *Pans* birth, may seem to be  
true, if it be rightly distinguished between  
things and times. For this *Pan* or Nature  
(which



(which we suspect, contemplate, and reverence more than is fit) took beginning from the word of God by the means of confused matter, and the entrance of prevarication and corruption. The definitives may well be thought the sisters of *Pan* or *Nature*, because the beginnings and continuances, and corruptions, and depressions, and dissolutions, and eminences, and labours, and felicities of things, and all the chances which can happen unto any thing are linkt with the chain of causes natural.

*Horns* are attributed unto him, because *Horns* are broad at the root and sharp at the ends, the nature of all things being like a *Pyramid* sharp at the top. For individual or singular things being infinite are first collected into *Species*, which are many also; then from *Species* into *generals*, and from *generals* (by ascending) are contracted into things or notions more general, so that at length *Nature* may seem to be contracted into a unity. Neither is it to be wondred at, that *Pan* toucheth Heaven with his horns, seeing the height of nature or universal *Ideas* do in some sort pertain to things divine, and there is a ready and short passage from *Metaphysick* to natural *Theology*.

The body of *Nature* is elegantly and with deep

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deep judgement depainted hairy, representing the beams or operations of creatures; for beams are as it were the hairs and bristles of *Nature*, & every creature is either more or less beamy, which is most apparent in the faculty of seeing, and no less in every vertue and operation that effectuates upon a distant object: for whatsoever works up any thing a far off, that may rightly be said to dart forth rayes or beams.

Moreover *Pans* beard is said to be exceeding long, because the beams or influences of celestiall bodies do operate and pierce farthest of all, and the Sun, when (his higher half is shadowed with a cloud) his beams break out in the lower, and looks as if he were bearded.

*Nature* is also excellently set forth with a biformented body, with respect to the differences between superior and inferior creatures. For the one part, by reason of their pulcritude, and equability of motion, and constancy, and dominion over the earth and earthly things, is worthily set out by the shape of man: and the other part in respect of their perturbations and unconstant motions (and therefore needing to be moderated by the celestial) may be well fitted with the figure of a brute beast. This description of his body  
pertains

pertains also to the participation of *Species*, for no natural being seems to be simple, but as it were participating and compounded of two. As for example; man hath something of a beast; a beast something of a plant; a plant something of an inanimate body, of that all natural things are in very deed biformed, that is to say, compounded of a superior, and inferior *Species*.

It is a witty Alegory, that same of the feet of a Goat, by reason of the upward tending motion of terrestrial bodies towards the Air and Heaven, for the Goat is a climbing creature, that loves to be hanging about the rocks and steep mountains; And this is done also in a wonderfull manner, even by those things which are destinated to this inferiour globe, as may manifestly appear in clouds and Meteors.

The two Ensigns which *Pan* bears in his hands do point, the one at Harmony, the other at Empiry: For the Pipe consisting of seven reeds, doth evidently demonstrate the consent and harmony and discordant concord of all inferiour creatures, which is caused by the motion of the seven Planets: And that of the Sheep-hook may be excellently applyed to the order of nature, which is partly right, partly crooked: This staffe therefore or  
rod

## 21 The Wisdom of the Vultures.

rod is especially crooked in the upper end, because all the works of divine providence in the world are done in a far fetcht and circular manner, so that one thing may seem to be effected, & yet indeed a clean contrary brought to passe; as the selling of *Joseph* into *Egypt*, and the like. Besides in all wise humane government, they that sit at the helme do more happily bring their purposes about, and insinuate more easily into the minds of the people, by pretexts and oblique courses, than by direct methods: so that all Scepters and Mirrors of authority ought in very deed to be crooked in the upper end.

*Pans* Cloak or mantle is ingeniously fained to be the skin of a Leopard, because it is full of spots: So the Heavens are spotted with stars, the Sea with rocks and Islands, the Land with flowers, and every particular creature also is for the most part garnished with divers colours about the superficies, which is as it were a mantle unto it.

The Office of *Pan* can be by nothing so lively conceived and expressed, as by faining him to be the God of Hunters, for every natural action, and so by consequence, motion and progression, is nothing else but a hunting. Arts and Sciences have their works, and humane councils their ends which they earnestly hunt after.

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ter. All natural things have either their food as a prey, or their pleasure as a recreation which they seek for, and that in most expert and sagacious manner.

*Torva Leana Lupum sequitur, Lupus ille  
Capellam.*

*Flarentem Cybissum sequitur lasciva  
Capella.*

The hungry Lyonesse ( with sharp de-  
fire )

Pursues the Wolfe ; the Wolfe the wan-  
ton Goat :

The Goat againe doth greedily as-  
pire

To have the trifol juyce passe down her  
throat.

Pan is also said to be the god of the Country-  
clowns, because men of this condition lead  
lives more agreeable unto nature, than those  
that live in the Cities and Courts of Princes,  
where Nature by too much art is corrupted ;  
So as the saying of the Poet ( though in  
the sence of love ) might be here veri-  
fied :

*Pars*

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*Part minima est ipsa puella sui.*

The Maid so trickt her self with Art,  
That of her self she is least part.

He was held to be Lord President of the mountains, because in the high mountains and hills, *Nature* lays her self most open and men most apt to view and contemplation.

Whereas *Pan* is said to be ( next unto *Mercury* ) the messenger of the gods, there is in that a divine mystery contained, for next to the word of God the Image of the World proclaims the power and wisdom divine, as sings the sacred Poet. Psal. 19. 1. *Celi enarrant gloriam Dei, atque opera manuum ejus indicat firmamentum.* The Heavens declare the glory of God, and firmament sheweth the works of his hands.

The *Nymphs*, that is, the souls of living things take great delight in *Pan*. For these souls are the delights of minions of *Nature*, and the direction or conduct of these *Nymphs* is with great reason attributed unto *Pan*, because the souls of all things living do follow their natural dispositions as their guides, and with infinite variety every one of them after his

his own fashion doth leap and frisk and dance with incessant motion about her. The *Satyrs* and *Sylens* also, to wit, youth and old age are some of *Pans* followers: for of all natural things there is a lively, jocund, and (as I may say) a dancing age, and an age again that is dull, bibbling and reeling. The carriages and dispositions of both which ages to some such as *Democritus* was (that would observe them duly) might peradventure seem as ridiculous and deformed as the gambols of the *Satyrs*, or the gestures of the *Sylens*.

Of those fears and terrours which *Pan* is said to be the Author, there may be this wise construction made; namely, That nature hath bred in every living thing a kind of care and fear, tending to the preservation of its own life and being, and to the repelling and shunning of all things hurtful. And yet *Nature* knows not how to keep a mean, but always intermixes vain and empty fears with such as are discreet and profitable: so that all things (if their in-sides might be seen) would appear full of *Panick* frights: but men especially in hard, fearful & diverse times, are wonderfully insatuated with superstition, which indeed is nothing else but a *Panick* terror.



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Concerning the audacity of *Pan* in challenging *Cupid* at wrestling ; the meaning of it is, that matter wants no inclination and desire to the relapsing and dissolution of the World into the old *Chaos*, if her malice and violence were not restrained and kept in order, by the prepotent unity and agreement of things signified by *Cupid*, or the god of love ; and therefore it was a happy turn for men and all things else, that in that conflict *Pan* was found too weak and overcome.

To the same effect may be interpreted his catching of *Typhon* in a net : for howsoever there may sometimes happen vast and unwonted Tumors ( as the name of *Typhon* imports ) either in the Sea or in the Air, or in the earth, or elsewhere, yet *Nature* doth intangle it in an intricate toil, and curb and restrain it, as it were with a chain of Adamant, the excesses and insolencies of these kind of bodies.

But for as much as it was *Pans* good fortune to find out *Ceres* as he was hunting, and thought little of it, which none of the other Gods could do, though they did nothing else but seek her, and that very seriously ; it gives us this true and grave admonition, That we expect not to receive things necessary for  
life

life and manners from philosophical abstractions, as from the greater Gods; albeit they applied themselves to no other studie, but from *Pan*; that is, from the discreet observation, and experience, and the universal knowledge of the things of this World; whereby (oftentimes even by chance, and as it were going a hunting) such inventions are lighted upon.

The quarrell he made with *Appollo* about *Musick*, and the event thereof contains a wholsome instruction, which may serve to restrain mens reasons and judgments with reins of sobriety, from boasting and glorying in their gifts. For there seems to be a two-fold Harmony, or Musick; the one of divine providence, and the other of humane reason. Now to the ears of mortals, that is to humane judgement, the administration of the World and creatures therein, and the more secret judgements of God, sound very hard and harsh; which folly, albeit it be well set out with Asses ears; yet notwithstanding these ears are secret, and do not openly appear, neither is it perceived or noted as a deformity by the vulgar.

Lastly, it is not to be wondred at, that there is nothing attributed unto *Pan* concerning loves, but only of his marriage with *Echo*:

*cho*: For the World or Nature doth enjoy it self, and in it self all things else. Now he that loves would enjoy something, but where there is enough there is no place left to desire. Therefore there can be no wanton love in *Pan* or the World, nor desire to obtain any thing (seeing he is contented with himself) but only speeches, which (if plain) may be intimated by the Nymph *Eccho*, or if more quaint by *Syrinx*. It is an excellent invention that *Pan* or the World is said to make choise of *Eccho* only (above all other speeches or voyces) for his wife: for that alone is true philosophy, which doth faithfully render the very words of the World; and it is written no otherwise than the World doth dictate, it being nothing else but the image or reflection of it, not adding any thing of its own, but only iterates and resounds. It belongs also to the sufficiency or perfection of the World, that he begets no issue: for the World doth generate in respect of its parts, but in respect of the whole how can it generate, seeing without it there is no body? Notwithstanding all this, the tale of that tatling Girle fastred upon *Pan*, may in very deed with great reason be added to this Fable: for by her are represented those vain and idle paradoxes

con-

concerning the nature of things which have been frequent in all ages, and have filled the world with novelties, fruitless if you respect the matter, changelings if you respect the kind, sometimes creating pleasure, sometimes tediousness with their overmuch prattling.

P E R S E U S, or War.

**P**erseus is said to have been employed by Pallas for the destroying of Medusa; who was very infestuous to the Western parts of the World, and especially about the utmost coasts of Hyberia. A monster to dire and horrid, that by her only aspect she turned men into stone. This Medusa alone of all the Gorgons was mortall, the rest not subject to death. Perseus therefore preparing himself for this noble enterprise, had arms and gifts bestowed on him by three of the gods: Mercury gave him wings annexed to his heels, Pluto a helmet, Pallas a shield and a Looking-glass. Notwithstanding (although he were thus furnished) he went not directly to Melusa, but first to the Grea, which by the mother side were sisters to the Gorgons. These Grea from their birth were hoar-headed, resembling old women.

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men. They had but one only eye, and one tooth among them all, both which, she that had occasion to go abroad, was wont to take with her, and at her return to lay them down again. This eye and tooth they lent to *Persus*: and so finding himself thoroughly furnished for the effecting of his design, hastens towards *Medusa*. Her he found sleeping, and yet durst not present himself with his face towards her; least she should awake; but turning his head aside beheld her in *Pallas*'s glasse; and (by this means directing his blow) cut off her head; from whose blood gushing out, instantly came *Pegasus* the flying horse. Her head thus smote off, *Persus* casts his blows on *Pallas* her shield, which yet retained this virtue, that whatsoever looked upon it, should become as stupid as a stone, or like one Planet stricken.

This Fable seems to direct the preparation and order, that isto be used in making of War: for the more apt and considerate undertaking whereof, three grave and wholesome precepts (favoring of the wisdom of *Pallas*) are to be observed.

First, That men do not much trouble themselves about the conquest of neighbor Nations, seeing that private possessions, and  
Empires

Empires are enlarged by different means for in the augmentation of private revenues, the vicinity of mens territories is to be considered : but in the propagation of publick dominions, the occasion and facility of making War, and the fruit to be expected ought to be instead of vicinity. Certainly the Romans, what time their conquests towards the West scarce reacht beyond *Liguria*, did yet in the East bring all the provinces as far as the mountain *Taurus* within the compass of their arms and command : and therefore *Perseus*, although he were bred and born in the East, did not yet refuse to undertake an expedition even to the uttermost bounds of the West.

Secondly, There must be a care had that the Motives of War be just and honorable, for that begets an alacrity, as well in the Souldiers that fight, as in the people that pay, it draws on and procures aides, & brings many other commodities besides. But there is no pretence to take up arms more pious, than the suppressing of *Tyranny*; under which yoke the people loose their courage, and are cast down without heart and vigor, as in the sight of *Medusa*.

Thirdly, It is wisely added, that seeing there were three *Gorgons* ( by which wars are



represented) *Perseus* undertook her only that was mortal; that is, he made choice of such a kind of War as was likely to be effected and brought to a period, not pursuing vast and endless hopes.

The furnishing of *Perseus* with necessaries was that which only advanced his attempt, and drew fortune to be of his side: for he had speed from *Mercury*, concealing of his counsels from *Oculus*, and *Providence* from *Pallas*.

Neither is it without an Alegory, and that full of matter too, that those wings of celerity were fastned to *Perseus* his heels, and not to his ankles; to his feet and not to his shoulders; because speed and celerity is required, not so much in the first preparations for War, as in those things which second and yield aid to the first: for there is no error in War more frequent, than that prosecutions and subsidiary forces do fail to answer the alacrity of the first onsets.

Now for that helmet which *Pluto* gave him, powerfull to make men invisible, the morall is plain: but that two-fold gift of providence (to wit the sheild and looking-glasse) is full of mortality; for that kind of providence which like a shield avoids the force of blows is not alone needfull, but that  
also



also by which the strength and motions, and counsels of the enemy are discried, as in the looking-glass of *Pallas*.

But *Persens* albeit he were sufficiently furnished with aid and courage, yet was he to do one thing of special importance before he entred the lists with this Monster, & that was to have some intelligence with the *Gree*. These *Gree* are treasons which may be termed the Sisters of War, not descended of the same stock, but far unlike in nobility of birth; for Wars are general and heroicall, but Treasons are base and ignoble. Their description is elegant, for they are said to be gray-headed, and like old women from their birth; by reason that Traitors are continually vext with cares and trepidations. But all their strength (before they break out into open Rebellions) consists either in an eye or in a tooth; for every faction alienated from any state contemplates and bites. Besides, this eye and tooth is as it were common: for whatsoever they can learn and know is delivered and carried from one to another by the hands of faction. And as concerning the tooth, they do all bite alike, and sing the same song, so that hear one and you hear all. *Persens* therefore was to deal with these *Gree* for the love of their

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eye and tooth. Their eye to discover their tooth to sowe rumours and stir up envy, and to molest and trouble the minds of men. These things therefore being thus disposed and prepared, he addressees himself to the action of War, and sets upon *Medusa* as she slept: for a wise Captain will ever assault his enemy when he is unprepared and most secure; and then is there good use of *Pallas* her Glass: For most men, before it come to the push, can accurately prye into and discern their enemies estate: but the best use of this Glasse is in the very point of danger, that the manner of it may be so considered, as that the terror may not discourage, which is signified by that looking into this Glass with the face turned from *Medusa*.

The Monsters head being cut off, there follow two effects. The first was the procreation and raising of *Pegasus*, by which may be evidently be understood *Fame*, that (flying thorow the world) proclaims victory. The second is the bearing of *Medusaes* head in his shield; to which there is no kind of defence for excellency comparable: for the one famous and memorable Act prosperously effected and brought to pass, doth restrain the motions and insolencies of enemies,

enemies, and makes envy her self silent and amazed.

*ENDYMION, or a Favorite.*

**I**T is said that *Luna* was in love with the Shepherd *Endymion*, and in a strange and unwonted manner bewrayed her affection: for he lying in a Cave framed by nature, under the mountain *Latmus*, she oftentimes descended from her sphere to enjoy his company as he slept; and after she had kissed him ascended up again. Yet notwithstanding this his idleness and sleepy security did not any way impair his estate or fortune: for *Luna* brought it so to pass that he alone (of all the rest of the Shepherds) had his flock in best plight, and most fruitful.

This Fable may have reference to the nature and disposition of Princes; for they being full of doubts and prone to jealousy, do not easily acquaint men of prying and curious eyes, and as it were of vigilant and wakeful dispositions, with the secret humors and manners of their life; but such rather as are of quiet & observant natures, suffering them to do what they list, without further scanning, making as if they were ignorant and perceiving

ving nothing but of a stupid disposition and posselt with sleep, yeilding unto them simple obedience, rather than sūe complements: for it pleaseth Princes now and then to descend from their Thrones of Majesty (like *Luna* from the superior orbe) and laying aside their Robes of dignity (which always to be cumbred with, would seem a kind of burthen) familiarly to converse with men of this condition, which they think may be done without danger: a quality chiefly noted in *Tyberius Caesar*; who (of all others) was a Prince most severe, yet such only were gracious in his favour, as being well acquainted with his disposition, did yet constantly dissemble as if they knew nothing. This was the custome also of *Lewis* the eleventh King of *France*, a cautious and wily Prince.

Neither is it without elegancy, that the cause of *Endymion* is mentioned in the Fable, because that it is a thing usual with such as are the favorites of Princes, to have certain pleasant retiring places, whither to invite them for recreation both of body and mind, and that without hurt or prejudice to their fortunes also. And indeed these kind of favourites are men commonly well to pass for Princes although peradventure they promote them.

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them not ever to places of honour, yet do they advance them sufficiently by their favour and countenance: neither do they affect them thus only to serve their own turn, but are wont to enrich them now and then with great dignities and bounties.

*The Sister of the GYANTS,  
or, Fame.*

**I**T is a Poetical relation that the Gyants begotten of the Earth made war upon Jupiter, and the other gods; and by the force of lightning they were resisted and overthrown. Whereat the earth being excited to wrath, in revenge of her children brought forth *Fame*, the youngest Sister of the Gyants.

*Illam, terra parens ira irritata Deorum*

*Extremam ( ut prohibent ) Cas Ence-*  
*ladoque sororem,*

*Progenit. ———*

Provok't by wrathfull Gods, the mother  
Earth

Gives *Fame*, the Giants youngest  
sister birth.

The

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The meaning of the Fable seems to be thus: by the Earth is signified the nature of the vulgar, always swollen and malignant, and still broaching new scandals against superiors, and having, gotten fit opportunity, stirs up rebels and seditious persons; that with impious courage do molest Princes, and endeavour to subvert their estates; but being suppress'd, the same natural disposition of the people still leaning to the viler sort, (being impatient of peace and tranquility) spread rumors, raise malicious slanders, repining whisperings, infamous libels, and others of that kind, to the detraction of them that are in authority: So as rebellious actions, and seditious reports, differ nothing in kind and bloud, but as it were in Sex only; the one sort being Masculine, and the other Feminine.

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ACT. 10.

*ACTÆON and PENTHEUS,*  
*or a curious Man.*

**T**HE curiositie of Men, in prying into secrets, and coveting with an undiscrēt desire to attain the knowledge of things forbidden, is set forth by the Ancients in two other examples: the one of *Actæon*, the other of *Pentheus*.

*Actæon* having unawares, and as it were by chance beheld *Diana* naked, was turned into a Stag, and devoured by his own Dogs.

And *Pentheus* climbing up into a tree; with a desire to be a spectator of the hidden sacrifices of *Bacchus*, was stricken with such a kind of frensie, as that whatsoever he look upon, he thought it alwayes double, supposing (among other things) he saw two *Suns*, and two *Thebes*; insomuch that running towards *Thebes*, spying another *Thebes*, instantly turned back again, and so kept still running forward and backward with perpetual unrest.

*Ennīdum veluti demens videt agmina*

*Pentheus.*



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*Et Solem geminum, duplices se ostendere Thebas.*

Pentheus amaz'd, doth troops of furies  
 spie ;  
 And Sun, and Thebes seem double to  
 his eye.

The first of the Fables pertains to the secrets of Princes, the second to divine mysteries. For those that are neer about Princes, and come to the knowledge of more secrets than they would have them, do certainly incur great hatred. And therefore (suspecting that they are shot at, and opportunities watch for their overthrow) do lead their lives like Stags, fearful and full of suspicion. And it happens oftentimes that their Servants, and those of their household, (to insinuate into the Princes favour) do accuse them to their destruction: for against whomsoever the Princes displeasure is known, look how many servants that man hath, and you shall find them for the most part so many traytors unto him, that his end may prove to be like *Atre-*  
*ons.*

The other is the misery of *Pentheus*: for  
 that

that by the height of knowledge and nature in Philosophy, having climed, as it were, into a tree, do with rash attempts (unmindfull of their frailty) pry into the secrets of divine mysteries, and are justly plagued with perpetual inconstancy, and with wavering and perplexed conceits: for seeing the light of nature is one thing, and of grace another; it happens so to them as if they saw two *Suns*. And seeing the actions of life, and decrees of will do depend of the understanding, it follows that they doubt, and are inconstant no lesse in will than in opinion, & so in like manner they may be said to see two *Thebes*: for by *Thebes* (seeing there was the habitation and refuge of *Pentheus*) is meant the end of actions. Hence it comes to pass that they know not whither they go, but as distracted and unresolved in the scope of their intentions, are in all things carried about with sudden passions of the mind.

*ORPHEUS, or Philosophy*

**T**HE tale of *Orpheus*, though common, had never the fortune to be fitly applied in every point. It may seem to represent the Image of Philosophie: for the person

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person of *Orpheus* ( a man admirable and divine, and so excellently skilled in all kind of harmonie, that with his sweet ravishing musick he did as it were charm and allure all things to follow him ) may carry a singular description of Philosophy : for the labours of *Orpheus* do so far exceed the labours of *Hercules* in dignity and efficacy , as the works of wisdom, excell the works of fortitude.

*Orpheus* for the love he bare to his wife, snatcht, as it were, from him by untimely death, resolved to go down to Hell with his Harp, to try if he might obtain her of the infernal powers. Neither were his hopes frustrated : for having appeased them with the melodious sound of his voice and touch, prevailed at length so far, as that they granted him leave to take her away with him ; but on this condition, that she should follow him, and he not to look back upon her, till he came to the light of the upper World ; which he ( impatient of, out of love and care, and thinking that he was in a manner past all danger ) neverthelesse violated, insomuch that the covenant is broken, and she forthwith tumbles back again headlong into hell. From that time *Orpheus* falling into a deep melancholly, became a contemner of women

men kind, and bequeathed himself to a solitary life in the deserts; where, by the same melody of his voyce and harp, he first drew all manner of wild beasts unto him, who (forgetfull of their savage fiercenesse, and casting off the precipitate provocations of lust and fury, not caring to satiate their voracity by hunting after prey) as at a *Theater* in fawning and reconciled amity one towards another, stand all at the gaze about him, and attentively lend their ears to his Musick. Neither is this all; for so great was the power and alluding force of his harmonie, that he drew the woods and moved the very stones to come and place themselves in an orderly and decent fashion about him. These things succeeding happily, and with great admiration for a time; at length certain *Thracian* Women (possessed with the spirit of *Bacchus*) made such a horrid and strange noise with their Cornets, that the sound of *Orpheus* harp could no more be heard; insomuch as that harmonie, which was the bond of that order and society being dissolved, all disorder began again; and the beasts (returning to their wonted nature) pursued one another unto death as before: neither did the trees or stones remain any longer in their places: and *Orpheus* himself

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self was by these female *Furies* torn in pieces, & scattered all over the desert. For whose cruel death the river *Helicon* ( sacred to the *Muses* ) in horrible indignation, hid his head under ground and raised it again in another place.

The meaning of this Fable seems to be thus. *Opheus's* Musick is of two sorts, the one appeasing the infernal powers, the other attracting beasts and trees. The first may be fitly applyed to natural philosophy, the second to morall or civill discipline.

The most noble work of natural philosophy, is the restitution and renovation of things corruptible; the other ( as a lesser degree of it ) the preservation of bodies in their estate, detaining them from dissolution and putrefaction. And if this gift may be done in mortals, certainly it can be done by no other means than by the due and exquisite temper of nature, as by the melody and delicate touch of an instrument. But seeing it is of all things most difficult, it is seldome or never attained unto; and in all likelihood for no other reason, more than through curious diligence & untimely impatience. And therefore Philosophy hardly able to produce so excellent an effect in a pensive humor, ( and that without cause )  
busies

busies her self about humane objects, and by perswasion and eloquence, insinuating the love of vertue, equity, and concord in the minds of men; draws multitudes of people to a society, makes them subject to laws, obedient to government, and forgetfull of their unbridled affections, whilst they give ear to precepts, and submit themselves to discipline; whence follows the building of houses, erecting of towns, planting of fields and Orchards, with trees and the like, inso-much that it would not be amisse to say, that even thereby stones, and woods were called together and settled in order. And after serious triall made and frustrated about the restoring of a body mortal; this care of ci-vill affairs follows in his due place: because by a plain demonstration of the unevitable necessitie of death mens minds are moved to seek eternity by the fame and glory of their merits. It is also wisely said in the Fable, that *Orpheus* was averse from the love of women and marriage, because the delights of wedlock and the love of children do for the most part hinder men from enterprising great and noble designs for the publick good, holding posteritie a sufficient step to immortality without actions.

Besides even the very works of wisdom,  
(al-

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(although amongst all humane things they do most excell) do nevertheless meet with their periods. For it happens that (after kingdoms and common weaths have flourished for a time) even tumults, and seditions, and wars arise; in the midst of which hurly-burlies, first laws are silent, men return to the pravitie of their natures; fields and towns are wasted and depopulated; and then (if their furie continue) learning and philosophie must needs be dis-membred; so that a few fragments only, and in some places will be found like the scattered boards of shipwrack, so as a barbarous age must follow; and the streams of *Hellicon* being hid under the earth (until the vicissitude of things passing) they break out again and appear in some other remote nation, though not perhaps in the same climate,

### *COE LUM, or Beginnings.*

**W**E have it from the Poets by tradition, that *Cælum* was the ancientest of the Gods, and that his members of generation were cut off by his son *Saturn*. *Saturn* had many children, but devored them as soon as they were born. *Jupiter* only escaped, who being come to mans estate, thrust



thrust *Saturn* his father into Hell, and so usurped the kingdom. Moreover he pared off his fathers genitals with the same faulchin that *Saturn* dismembred *Cælum*, and cast them into the Sea, from whence came *Venus*. Not long after this, *Jupiter* (being scarce settled & confirmed in this kingdom) was invaded by two memorable wars. The first of the *Titans*, in the suppressing of which *Sol* (who alone of all the *Titans* favoring *Jupiters* side) took exceeding great pains. The second was of the Giants, whom *Jupiter* himself destroyed with thunderbolts: and so all wars being ended, he reigned secure.

This Fable seems enegmatically to shew from whence all things took their beginning, not much differing from that opinion of Philosophers; which *Democritus* afterwards labored to maintain, attributing eternity to the first Matter, and not to the World. In which he comes somewhat near the truth of divine writ, telling us of a huge deformed Mass, before the beginning of the six days work.

The meaning of the Fable is this; By *Cælum* may be understood that vast concavity, or vaulted compass that comprehends all matter: and by *Saturn* may be meant the matter

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matter it self, which takes from his Parent all power of generating; for the universality or whole bulk of matter alwaies remains the same, neither increasing or diminishing in respect of the quality of its nature: but by the divers agitations and motions of it, were first produced imperfect, and ill agreeing compositions of things, making as it were certain worlds for proofs or assayes, and so in proceſſe of time a perfect fabrick or ſtructure was framed, which ſhould ſtill retain and keep his form. And therefore the government of the firſt age was ſhadowed by the kingdome of *Saturn*, who for the frequent diſſolutions and ſhort continuances of things was aptly ſained to devour his children. The ſucceeding government was diſciph-ered by the reign of *Jupiter*, who confined thoſe continual mutations unto *Tartarus*, a place ſignifying perturbation. This place ſeems to be all that middle place between the lower Superficies of Heaven, and the center of the earth: in which all perturbation and fragility and mortality or corruption are frequent. During the former generation of things in the time of *Saturns* reign, *Venus* was not born: for ſo long as in the univerſality of Matter, diſcord was better and more prevalent than concord, it was neceſſary  
that

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that there should be a totall dissolution or mutation, and that in the whole fabrick. And by this kind of generation were creatures produced before *Saturn* was deprived of his enitals. When this ceased, that other which gwrought by *Venus*, immediately came in, consisting in settled and prevalent concord of things, so that mutation should be only in respect of the parts, the universal fabrick remaining whole and inviolate.

*Saturn* they say was deposed and cast down into Hell, but not destroyed and utterly extinguisht, because there was an opinion that the world should relapse into the old *Chaos* and *interregnum* again, which *Lucretius* prayed might not happen in his time:

*Quod procul à nobis, flectat fortuna  
gubernans.*

*Et ratio potius quam res persuadeat  
ipsa.*

Of guiding providence be gracious,

That this Doooms-day be far remov'd  
from us;

And grant that by us it may be effected,

Rather than, on us in our times effected.

for afterward the world should subsist by its own quantity and power. Yet from the beginning there was no rest: for in the celestial Regions there first followed notable mutations, which by the power of the Sun (predominating over superior bodies) were so quieted, that the state of the world should be conserved: and afterward (in inferiour bodies, by the suppressing and dissipating of inundations, tempests, winds, and general earthquakes, a more peacefull and durable agreement and tranquility of things followed. But of this Fable it may convertibly be said, that the Fable contains philosophy, and philosophy again the Fable: For we know by faith, that all these things are nothing else but the long-since ceasing and failing Oracles of Sence, seeing that both the Matter and Fabr.ck of the World are most truly referred to a Creator.

*P R O T E U S, or matter.*

**T**HE Poets say that Proteus was Neptune's heard man, a grave Sir, and so excellent a Prophet, that he might well be termed thrice excellent: for he knew not only things to come, but even things past as well as present; so that besides his skill in divina-

divination, he was the messenger and interpreter of all Antiquities and hidden mysteries. The place of his abode was a huge vast Cave, where his custome was every day at noon to count his flock of Sea-calves, and then to go to sleep. Moreover he that desired his advice in any thing, could by no other means obtain it, but by catching him in Manacles, and holding him fast therewith; who neverthelesse to be at liberty would turn himself into all manner of forms and wonders of nature; sometimes into fire, sometimes into water, sometimes into the shape of beasts and the like, till at length he were restored to his own form again.

This Fable may seem to unfold the secrets of nature and the properties of *Matter*. For under the person of *Proteus*, the first Matter (which next to God is the ancientest thing) may be represented: for Matter dwels in the concavity of heaven as in a Cave.

He is *Neptunes* bond-man, because the operations and dispensations of Matter are chiefly exercised in liquid bodies.

His flock or heard seems to be nothing but the ordinarie *Species* of sensible creatures, plants and minerals, in which Matter

seems to diffuse and as it were spend it self; so that after the forming and perfecting of these kinds, (having ended as it were her task) she seems to sleep and take her rest, not attempting the composition of any more *Species*. And this may be the Moral of *Protens* his counting of his flock, and of his sleeping.

Now this is said to be done, not in the morning, nor in the evening, but at noon, to wit, at such time as is most fit and convenient for the perfecting and bringing forth of *Species* out of Matter, duly prepared and predisposed, and in the middle, as it were, between their beginnings and declinations, which we know sufficiently (out of the holy history) to be done about the time of the Creation: for then by the power of that divine word (*Procreatus*) Matter at the Creators command did congregate it self (not by ambages or turnings, but instantly) to the production of its work into an act and constitution of *Species*. And thus far have we the Narration of *Protens* (free and unrestrained) together with his flock compleat: for the universality of things with their ordinary structures and compositions of *Species* bears the face of matter not limited and constrained, and of the flock al-

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so of material beings. Nevertheless, if any expert Minister of Nature, shall encounter Matter by main force, vexing and urging her with intent and purpose to reduce her to nothing; she contrarywise (seeing annihilation and absolute destruction cannot be effected but by the omnipotency of God) being thus caught in the straits of necessity, doth change and turn her self into divers strange forms and shapes of things, so that at length (by fetching a circuit, as it were) she comes to a period, and if (the force continue) betakes her self to her former being. The reason of which constraint or binding will be more facile and expedite, if matter be laid hold on by Manacles, that is, by extremities.

Now whereas it is fained that *Proteus* was a Prophet, well skilled in three differences of times, it hath an excellent agreement with the nature of Matter: for it is necessary that he that will know the properties and proceedings of Matter, should comprehend in his understanding the sum of all things, which have been, which are, or which shall be, although no knowledge can extend so far as to singular and individual beings.



*MEMNON, or a youth too forward.*

**T**H E Poets say that *Memnon* was the Son of *Aurora*, who (adorned with beautifull armour, and animated with popular applause) came to the *Trojan* war: where (in a rash boldness, hasting unto, and thirsting after glory) he enters into single combat with *Achilles*, the valientest of all the *Grecians*, by whose powerfull hand he was there slain. But *Jupiter* pittying his destruction, sent birds to modulate certain lamentable and dolefull notes at the Solemnization of his funeral obsequies. Whose statue also (the Sun reflecting on it with his morning beams) did usually, as is reported, send forth a mournfull sound.

This Fable may be applyed to the unfortunate destinies of hopefull young men, who like the sons of *Aurora* (pufft up with the glittering shew of vanity and ostentation) attempt actions above their strength, and provoke and presse the most valient *Heroes* to combat with them, so that (meeting with their over match) are vanquished and destroyed, whose untimely death is oft accompanied with much pittie and commiseration.

ration. For among all the disasters that cannot happen to mortals, there is none so lamentable and so powerfull to move compassion as the flower of vertue, cropt with too sudden a mischance. Neither hath it been often known that men in their green years become so loathsome and odious, as that at their deaths either sorrow is stinted, or commiseration moderated: but that lamentation and mourning do not only flutter about their obsequies like those funeral birds; but this pitifull commiseration doth continue for a long space, and especially by occasions and new motions, and beginning of great matters, as it were by the morning rays of the *Sun*, their passions and desires are renewed.

*TITHONUS, or Satiric.*

**I**T is elegantly fained that *Tithonus* was the paramour of *Harmonia*, who (desirous to enjoy his company) petitioned *Jupiter* that he might never dye, but (through womanish oversight) forgetting to insert this clause in her Petition, that he might not withall grow old and feeble, it followed, that he was only freed from the condition of mortality; but for old age, that came upon

him in a marvellous and miserable fashion, agreeable to the state of those who cannot dye, yet every day grow weaker and weaker with age. Insomuch that *Jupiter* (in commiseration of that his misery) did at length metamorphose him into a Grasshopper.

This Fable seems to be an ingenious Character or description of pleasure, which in the beginning, & as it were in the morning seems to be pleasant and delightfull, that men desire they might enjoy and monopolize it for ever unto themselves, unmindfull of that Satiety and loathing, which (like old age) will come upon them before they be aware. And so at last (when the use of pleasure leaves men, the desire and affection not yet yielding unto death) it comes to passe that men please themselves only by talking and commemorating those things which brought pleasure unto them in the flower of their age, which may be observ'd in libidinous persons, and also in men of military professions: the one delighting in beastly talk, the other boasting of their valorous deeds, like Grasshoppers, whose vigour consists only in their voyce.

JUNOES SUTOR,  
or Basenesse.

**T**HE Poets say, that *Jupiter*, to enjoy his lustfull delights, took upon him the shape of sundry creatures, as of a Bull, of an Eagle, of a Swan, and of a golden shower: but being a Sutor to *Juno* he came in a form most ignoble and base, an object full of contempt and scorn, resembling indeed a miserable cuckow, weather beaten with rain and tempest, nummed, quaking, and half dead with cold.

This Fable is wise and seems to be taken out of the bowels of morality; the sence of it being this, That men boast not too much of themselves, thinking by ostentation of their own worth to insinuate themselves into estimation and favour with men, the successe of such intentions being for the most part measured by the nature and disposition of those to whom men sue for grace: who if of themselves they be endowed with no gifts and ornaments of nature, but are only of haughty and malignant spirits (intimated by the person of *Juno*) then are Sutors to know that it is good policy to omit all kind of appearance that may any way shew their own

least praise or worth; and that they much deceive themselves in taking any other course. Neither is it enough to shew deformity in obsequiousnesse, unless they also appeare even object and base in their very persons.

*CUPID, or an Atome.*

**T**Hat which the Poets say of *Cupid* or *Love* cannot properly be attributed to one and the self same person; and yet the difference is such, that (by rejecting the confusion of persons) the similitude may be received.

They say that *Love* is the ancientest of all the gods, and of all things else except *Chaos*, which they hold to be a cotemporary with it. Now as touching *Chaos*, that by the Ancients was never dignified with divine honour, or with the title of the god. And as for *Love*, they absolutely bring him in without a father; only some are of opinion, that he came of an Egge that was laid by *Nex*, and that on *Chaos* he begot the god and all things else. There are four things attributed unto him, perpetual infancy, blindness, nakednesse, and an Archery. There was also another *Love* which was the youngest.

est of the gods, and he, they say, was the Son of *Nehus*. On this also they bestow the attributes of the elder *Love*, as in some sort well apply unto him.

This Fable tends and looks to the Cradle of *Nature*, - *Love* seeming to be the appetite or desire of the first matter, or (to speak more plain) the natural motion of the *Atom*, which is that ancient and only power that forms and fashions all things out of Matter, of which there is no Parent, that is to say, no Cause, seeing every cause is as a Parent to its effect. Of this power or vertue there can be no cause in *Nature* (as for *God*, we alwaies except him) for nothing was before it, and therefore no efficient cause of it. Neither was there any thing better known to *Nature*, and therefore neither *Good* nor *Evil*. Wherefore whatsoever it is, positive it is, & but inexpressible. Moreover, if the manner & proceeding of it were to be conceived, yet could it not be by any cause, seeing that (next unto *God*) it is the cause of causes, it self only without any cause. And perchance there is no likelihood, that the manner of it may be contained or comprehended within the narrow compass of human search. Not without reason therefore it is fained to come of an *Egge* which was layed

layed by *Nox*. Certainly the divine Philosopher grants so much: *Eccel. 3. 11. Cuncta fecit tempestatibus suis pulchra, & mundum tradidit disputationibus eorum, ita tamen ut non invenias homo opus, quod operatus est Deus, principio ad finem.* That is, he hath made every thing beautifull in their seasons, also he hath set the world in their meditations, yet man cannot find the work that God hath wrought, from the beginning even to the end. For the principal Law of nature, or power of this desire, created (by God) in these parcels of things, for concurring and meeting together (from whose repetitions and multiplications, all variety of creatures proceeded and were composed) may dazzle the eyes of mens understandings, and comprehended it can hardly be. The Greek Philosophers are observed to be very acute and diligent in seaching out the material principles of things: but in the beginnings of motion (wherein consists all the efficacy of operation) they are negligent and weak, and in this that we handle, they seem to be altogether blind and stammering: for the opinion of the *Peripateticks* concerning the appetite of Matter, caused by privation, is in a manner nothing else but words, which rather sound then signifie any reality. And those:



Those that refer it unto God do very well, but then they leap up, they ascend not by degrees: for doubtless there is one cheif Law subordinate to God, in which all natural things concur and meer, the same that in the fore-cited Scripture is demonstrated in these words, *Opus, quod operatus est Deus à principio usque ad finem*, the work that God hath wrought from the begining even to the end. But *Democritus* which entred more deeply into the consideration of this point after he had conceived an *Atome* with some small dimension and form, he attributed unto it one onely desire, or first motion simply or absolutely, and another comparatively or in respect: for he thought that all things did properly tend to the center of the world, whereof those bodies which were more material descend with swifter motion, & those that had less matter did on the contrary tend upward. But this meditation was very shallow, containing lesse then was expedient: for neither the turning of the celestial bodies in a round, nor shutting and opening of things may seem to be reduced or applied to this begining. And as for that opinion of *Epicurus* concerning the casual declination and agitation of the *Atome*, it is but a mere toy, and a plain evidence, that he was ignorant of

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of that point. It is therefore more apparent (than we could wish) that this *Cupid* or *Love* remains as yet clouded under the shades of *Night*. Now as concerning his attributes: He is elegantly described with perpetual infancie or childhood, because compound bodies they seem greater and more stricken in years: Whereas the first seeds of things or *Atoms*, they are little and diminute, and alwayes in their infancie.

He is also well fained to be naked, because all compound bodies to a man rightly judging, seem to be apparelled and clothed, and nothing to be properly naked but the first particles of things.

Concerning his blindness, the Allegory is full of wisdom: for this *Love* or *Desire* (whatsoever it be) seems to have but little providence, as directing his pace & motion by that which it perceives nearest, not unlike blind men that go by feeling: More admirable then, must that chief divine providence be, which (from things empty & destitute of providence, and as it were blind) by a constant and fatal law produceth so excellent an order and beauty of things.

The last thing which is attributed unto *Love* is *Archery*, by which is meant, that his vertue is such, as that it works upon a distant object.

object : because that whatsoever operates a far off, seems to shoot, as it were, an arrow. Wherefore whosoever holds the being both of *Atomes* and *Vacuity*, must needs infer, that the vertue of the *Atome* reacheth to a distant object : for if it were not so, there could be no motion at all, by reason of the interposition of *Vacuity*, but all things would stand stone still, and remain immovable.

Now as touching that other *Cupid* or *Love*, he may well be termed the youngest of the gods, because he could have no being, before the constitution of *Species* : And in his description the Allegory may be applied and traduced to manners: Nevertheless he holds some kind of conformity with the Elder : For *Venus* doth generally stir up a desire of conjunction and procreation, and *Cupid* her son doth apply this desire to some individual nature; so that the general disposition comes from *Venus*, the more exact sympathy from *Cupid* ; the one derived from causes more near, the other from beginnings more remote and fatal, and as it were from the elder *Cupid*, of whom every exquisite sympathy doth depend,

## D I O M E D E S, or Zeal.

**D**omedes flourishing with great fame and glory in the *Trojan* wars, and in high favour with *Pallas* was by her infligated (being indeed forwarder than he should have been) not to forbear *Venus* a jot, if he encountered with her in fight; which very boldly he performed, wounding her in the right arme. This presumptuous fact he carried clear for a while, and being honored and renowned for his many heroick deeds; at last returned into his own Countrey, where finding himself hard bestead with domestic troubles, fled into *Italy*, betaking himself to the protection of Forreiners, where in the beginning he was fortunate and royallie entertained by King *Dannus* with sumptuous gifts, raising many statues in honour of him throughout his Dominions. But upon the very first calamity that hapned unto this nation whereunto he was fled for succor, King *Dannus* enters into a conceit with himself that he had entertained a wicked guest into his family, and a man odious to the goddess, and an impugner of their Divinity, that had dared with his sword to assault and wound that Goddesse, who in their Religion they held

held it sacrilege so much as to touch. Therefore, that he might expiate his Countreys guilt, (nothing respecting the duties of hospitality, when the bonds of Religion tied him with a more reverend regard) suddenly slew *Diomedes*, commanding withall that his trophies and statues should be abolished and destroyed. Neither was it safe to lament this miserable destiny; But even his companions in arms, whilst they mourned at the funeral of their Captain, and fill'd all the places with complaints and lamentations, were suddenly metamorphosed into birds like unto Swans, who when their death approached, sing mellodious and mournful hymnes.

This fable hath a most rare and singular subject: for in any of the Poetical records, wherein the *Heroes* are mentioned, we find not that any one of them, besides *Diomedes*, did ever with his sword offer violence to any of the *Deities*. And indeed, the Fable seems in him to represent the nature and fortune of man, who of himself, doth propound and make this as the end of all his actions, to worship some divine power, or to follow some sect of Religion, though never so vain and superstitious, and with force and arms to defend the same: For although those bloudy

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dy quarrels for Religion were unknown to Ancients, ( the heathen gods not having so much as a touch of that jealousie, which is an attribute of the true God ) yet the wisdom of the ancient times seem to be so copious and full, as that, what was not known by experience, was yet comprehended by meditation and fictions. They then that endeavour to reform and convince any sect of Religion, ( though vain, corrupt, and infamous, shadowed by the person of *Venus* ) not by the force of argument and doctrine, and holiness of life, and by the weight of examples and authority, but labour to extirpate and root it out by fire and sword, and tortures, are encouraged, it may be, thereunto by *Pallas*, that is by the activity of *Prudence* and severity of judgement, by whose vigor and efficacy, they see into the falsity & vanity of these errors. And by this their hatred of pravity, and good zeal to Religion, they purchase to themselves great glory, and by the vulgar ( to whom nothing moderate can be gratefull ) are esteemed and honored as the only supporters of truth and religion, when others seem to be luke-warm and full of fear. Yet this glory and happiness doth seldome endure to the end, seeing every violent prosperity, if it prevent not alteration by

by an untimely death, grows to be unprosperous at last : For if it happen that by a change of government this banished and depressed Sect get strength, and so bear up again, then these zealous men so fierce in opposition before, are condemned, their very names are hatefull, and all their glory ends in oblique.

In that *Dionisedes* is said to be murdered by his host, it gives us to understand that the difference of religion breeds deceit and treacherie, even among nearest acquaintance.

Now in that lamentation and mourning was not tollerated but punished ; it puts us in mind, that let there be never so nefarious an act done, yet there is some place left for commiseration and pity, that even those that hate offences, should yet in humanity commiserate offenders, and pity their distress, it being the extremity of evill when Mercy is not suffered to have commerce with misery. Yea even in the cause as well of religion as impiety, many men may be noted and observed to have been compassionate. But on the contrary the complaints and moans of *Diomedes* followers, that is, of men of the same sect and opinion, are wont to be shrill and loud, like Swans, or  
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the birds of *Diomedes*. In whom also that part of the allegory is excellent to signifie that the last words of those that suffer death for religion, like the songs of dying Swans, do wonderfully work upon the minds of men and strike and remain a long time in their senses and memories.

### *D A E D A L U S, or Mechanick.*

**M**Echanical wisdome and industry, and in it unlawfull science perverted to wrong ends, is shadowed by the Ancients under the person of *Dædalus*, a man ingenious, but execrable. This *Dædalus* (for murdering his fellow servant that emulated him) being banished, was kindly entertained (during his exile) in many Cities, and Princes Courts: for indeed he was the raiser and builder of many goodly structures, as well in honour of the gods, as the beauty and magnificence of Cities, and other publick places: but for his works of mischief he is most notorious. It is he which framed that engine which *Pasiphaë* used to satisfie her lust in companying with a Bull; so that by this his wretched industrie, and pernicious device, that Monster *Minotaur* (the destruction of so many hopefull youths) took his accursed and infamous beginning, and studying to  
cover

cover and increase one mischief with another; for the security and preservation of this Monster he invented and built a Labyrinth, a work for intent and use most nefarious and wicked, for skill and workmanship famous and excellent. Afterward that he might not be noted only for works of mischief, but be sought after as well for remedies, as for instruments of destruction, he was the Author of that ingenious, device concerning the clue of thread, by which the Labyrinth was made passable without any let. This *Dadalus* was persecuted by *Minos* with great severity, diligence and inquiry, but he always found the means to avoid and escape his tyranny. Lastly he taught his son *Icarus* to fly, but the novice in ostentation of his art soaring too high, fell into the Sea and was drowned.

The Parable seems to be thus: in the beginning of it may be noted that kind of envy or emulation that lodgeth and wonderfully swaies and domineers amongst excellent artificers, there being no kind of people more reciprocally tormented with bitter and deadly hatred than they.

The banishment also of *Dadalus* (a punishment inflicted on him against the rules of policie and providence) is worth the noting:

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ting : for Artificers have this prerogative to find entertainment and welcome in all Countries , so that exile to an excellent workman can hardly be termed a punishment, whereas other conditions and states of life can scarce live out of their own Country. The admiration of Artificers is propagated and increast in forraign and strange nations, seeing it is a natural and inbred disposition of men to value their own countrey-men ( in respect of Mechanical works ) lesse than strangers.

Concerning the use of Mechanical Arts, that which follows is plain. The life of man is much beholding to them, seeing many things ( conducing to the ornament of Religion, to the grace of civill discipline, and to the beautifying of all humane kind ) are extracted out of their treasures : and yet notwithstanding from the same *Megazine* or storehouse are produced instruments both of lust and death; for to omit the wiles of bands, we well know how far exquisite poysons, warlike engines, and such like mischiefs ( the effects of Mechanical inventions ) do exceed the *Minotaur* himself in malignity and savage cruelty.

Moreover that of the *Labyrinth* is an excellent Allegory, whereby is shadowed the nature

nature of Mechanical sciences; for all such handycraft works as are more ingenious and accurate, may be compared to a Labyrinth in respect of subtilty and divers intricate passages, and in other plain resemblances; which by the eye of judgement can hardly be guided and discerned, but only by the line of experience.

Neither is it impertinently added, that he which invented the intricate nooks of the Labyrinth, did also shew the commodity of the clue: For Mechanical Arts are of ambiguous use, serving as well for hurt as for remedy, and they have in a manner power both to loose and bind themselves.

Unlawfull trades, and so by consequence Arts themselves, are often persecuted by *States*, that is by laws, which do condemn them and prohibite men to use them. Nevertheless they are hid and retained every where, finding lurking holes, & places of receipt, which was well observed by *Tacitus* of the Mathematicians & figure flingers of his time in a thing not so much unlike; *Genus (inquit) hominum quod in civitate nostra semper & retinebitur & vetabitur.* There is a kind of men (saith he) that will alwaies abide in our City though alwaies forbidden. And yet notwithstanding unlawfull and curious

curious arts of what kind soever, in tract of time, when they cannot perform what they promise, do fall from the good opinion that was held of them (no otherwise than *Icarus* fell down from the skies) they grow to be contemned and scorned, and so perish by too much ostentation. And to say the truth, they are not so happily restrained by the reins of Law, as bewrayed by their own vanity.

*ERICTHONIS. or Imposture.*

**T**HE Poets fable that *Vulcan* solicited *Minerva* for her Virginity, and impatient of denial with an inflamed desire offered her violence, but in struggling his seed fell upon the ground, whereof came *Erichonius*, whose body from the middle upward, was of a comely and apt proportion, but his thighs and legs like the tail of an Eel, small and deformed. To which Montrosity he being conscious, became the first inventor of the use of Chariots, whereby that part of his body which was well proportioned might be seen, and the other which was ugly and uncomely might be hid.

This strange and prodigious fiction may seem to shew that art which (for the great use

use it hath of fire ) is shadowed by *Vulcan*, although it labour by much striving with corporeal substances to force nature, and to make her subject to it ( she being for her industrious works rightly represented by *Minerva* ) yet seldome or never attains the end it aims at, but with much ado and great pains ( wrestling as it were with her ) comes short of its purpose, and produceth certain imperfect births and lame works, fair to the eye, but weak and defective in use with many Impostors ( with much subtilty and deceit ) set to view, and carry about, as it were, in triumph, as may for the most part be noted in Chymical productions, and other Mechanical subtilties and novelries, especially when ( rather prosecuting their intent, than reclining their errours ) they rather strive to overcome nature by force, than sue for her embracements by due obsequiousness and observance.

*DENCALION, or Resurrection.*

THE Poets say, that ( the people of the old world being destroyed by a general deluge ) *Dencalion* and *Pirrha* were only left alive ; who praying with fervant and zealous devotion, that they might know by

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what means to repair mankind; had answer from an Oracle that they should obtain what they desired, if taking the bones of their mother they cast them behind their backs, which at first struck them with great amazement and despair, seeing (all things being defaced by the flood) it would be an endless work (to find their mothers sepulchre, but at length they understood that by bones the stones of the earth (seeing the earth was the mother of all things) were signified by the Oracle.

This Fable seems to reveal a secret of Nature, and to correct an error familiar to mens conceits: for through want of knowledge, men think that things may take renovation and restoration from their putrefaction and decay, no otherwise than the *Phoenix* from the ashes: which in no case can be admitted, seeing such kind of materials, when they have fulfilled their periods, are unapt for the beginnings of such things: we must therefore look back to more common principles.

**T**HE *Phoenix* is a bird which is said to live only a certain number of years, and when it is grown old it builds a nest of spices and other aromatick woods, and sits upon it till it is consumed by fire, and then it is said to rise again from the ashes. **NE**



NEMESIS, or the Vicissitude  
of things.

**N***emesis* is said to be a goddesse venerable unto all, but to be feared of none but potentates and fortunes favorites. She is thought to be the daughter of *Oceanus* and *Nox*. She is purtrayed with wings on her shoulders, and on her head a Coronet; bearing in her right hand a javelin of Ash, and in her left a Pitcher with the similitudes of *Aethiopians* engraven on it: and lastly she is described sitting on a Hart.

The Parable may be thus unfolded. Her name *Nemesis* doth plainly signifie Revenge or Retribution, her office and administration being (like a Tribune of the people) to hinder the constant and perpetual felicity of happy men, and to interpose her word, *veto*, I forbid the continuance of it, that is, not only to chastice insolency, but to intermix prosperity (though harmlesse and in a mean) with the vicissitudes of adversity, as if it were a custome, that no mortall man should be admitted to the Table of the gods but for sport. Truly when I read that Chapter, wherein *Caius Plinius* hath collected his misfortunes and miseries of *Augustus Caesar*,

whom of all men I thought the most happy, who had also a kind of Art to use and enjoy his fortune, and in whose mind might be noted neither pride, nor lightnesse, nor niceness, nor disorder, nor melancholly ( as that he had appointed a time to dye of his own accord ) I then deemed this Goddesse to be great and powerfull, to whose altar so worthy a Sacrifice as this was drawn.

The Parents of this Goddesse were *Oceanus* and *Nox*, that is, the vicissitude of things and divine judgement obscure and secret: for the alteration of things are aptly represented by the Sea, in respect of the continual ebbing and flowing of it: and hidden providence is well set forth by the Night: for even the Nocturnal *Nemesis* ( seeing humane judgement differs much from divine ) was seriously observed by the heathen.

Virgil *Æneid.* lib. 2.

—*Cadit & Riphæus iustissimus unus,  
Qui fuit ex Tæneis, & servatissimus  
equi.  
Diis aliter visum*—

That

That day by Greekish force was Ri-  
pheus slain,  
So just and strict observer of the  
Law,  
As Troy within her walls did not con-  
tain  
A better man : Yet God then good  
saw.

She is described with wings, because the  
changes of things are so sudden, as that they  
are seen, before foreseen : for in the Re-  
cords of all ages, we find it for the most part  
true, that great Potentates, and wise men  
have perished by those misfortunes which  
they most contemned ; as may be observed  
in *Marcus Cicero*, who being admonished  
by *Decius Brutus* of *Octavius Cæsars* hypo-  
critical friendship and hollow heartedness  
towards him, returns this answer, *Te autem, mi  
Brute, sicut debio, amo, quod istud quicquid  
est nugarum me scire voluisti.* . I must ever  
acknowledge my self ( *Dear Brutus* ) be-  
holding to thee, in love, for that thou hast  
been so carefull to acquaint me with that  
which I esteem but as a needless trifle to be  
doubted.

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*Nemesis* is also adorned with a Coroner, to shew the envious and malignant disposition of the vulgar, for when fortunes favorites and great potentates come to ruine, then do the common people rejoyce, setting as it were a crown upon the head of revenge.

The Javelin in her right hand points at those whom she actually strikes and pierceth thorow.

And before those, whom she destroyes not in their calamity & misfortune, she ever presents that black and dismall spectacle in her left hand: for questionlesse to men sitting as it were upon the pinnacle of prosperity, the thoughts of death and painfullnesse of sickness and misfortunes, perfidiousness of friends, treacherie of foes, change of state, and such like, seem as ugly to the eye of their meditations, as those *Ethiopian*s pictured in *Nemesis* her Pitcher. *Virgil* in describing the battell of *Actium*, speaks thus elegantly of *Cleopatra*.

*Regina in medijs patrio vocat agmina  
fistro,  
Nec dum etiam geminos a tergo respicit  
angues.*

The Queen amidst this hurly-burly  
stands,

And with her Countrey Timbrell calls  
her bands,

Not spying yet where crawl'd behind  
her back.

Two deadly Snakes with venom speck-  
led back.

But not long after, which way soever she  
turned, troops of *Ethiopians* were still before  
her eyes.

Lastly, It is wisely added, that *Nemesis*  
rides upon an *Hart*, because a *Hart* is a most  
lively creature. And albeit, it may be,  
that such as are cut off by death in their youth  
prevent and shun the power of *Nemesis*; yet  
doubtlesse such, whose prosperity and  
power continue long, are made subject  
unto her, and lye as it were troden under  
her feet.

*ACHELONS*, or *Battell*.

It is a Fable of antiquity, that when *Her-  
cules* and *Achelous* as Rivals contended  
for the marriage of *Deianira*, the matter  
drew them to combat, wherein *Achelous*

took upon him many diverse shapes, for so was it in his power to do, and amongst others, transforming himself into the likeness of a furious wilde Bull, assaults *Hercules*, and provokes him to fight. But *Hercules*, for all this, sticking to his old humane form, courageously encounters him, and to the Combate goes roundly on. But this was the event, that *Hercules* tore away one of the Bulls horns, wherewith he being mightily daunted and grieved, to ransom his horn again, was contented to give *Hercules* in exchange thereof, the *Amalthean* horn, or *Cornu Copiae*.

This Fable hath relation unto the expeditions of war, for the preparations thereof on the defensive part (which express in the person of *Achelus*) is very diverse and uncertain. But the invading party is most commonly of one sort, and that very single, consisting of an army by land, or perhaps of a Navy by Sea. But for a King that in his own Territorie expects an enemy, his occasions are infinite. He fortifies Towns, he assemblies men out of the Countreys and villages, he raiseth Cittadels, he buildes and breaks down Bridges, he disposeth Garrisons, and placeth troops of Souldiers on passages of Rivers; on Ports, on Mountains, and  
ambushes

ambushes in Woods, and is busied with a multitude of other directions, insomuch that every day he prescribeth new forms and orders; and then at last having accomodated all things compleat for defence, he then rightly represents the form and manner of a fierce fighting Bull. On the other side, the invader his greatest care is, the fear to be distressed for victuals in an Enemy-Country. And therefore affects chiefly to hasten on battell: for if it should happen that after a field fought, he prove the Victor, and as it were, break the horn of the enemy, then certainly this follows that his enemy being stricken with terror, and abased in his reputation, presently bewrays his weakness, and seeking to repair his loss, retires himself to some strong hold, abandoning to the Conquerour the spoil and sack of his Countrey and Cities: which may well be termed a type of the *Amalibeian* horn.

*DIONYSUS, or Passions.*

THEY say that *Semele*, *Jupiters* Sweet-heart (having bound her Paramour by an irrecoverable oath to grant her one request which she would require) desired that he would accompany her in the same form, where.



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wherein he accompanied *Juno*: which he granting (as not able to deny) it came to pass that the miserable wench was burnt with lightning. But the infant which she bare in her womb, *Jupiter* the Father took out, and kept it in a gash which he cut in his thigh, till the months were compleat that it should be born. This burden made *Jupiter* somewhat to limp, whereupon the child (because it was heavy and troublesome to its Father, while it lay in his thigh) was called *Dionysus*. Being born, it was committed to *Proserpina* for some years to be nursed, and being grown up, it had such a maiden-face, as that a man could hardly judge whether it were a boy or a girl. He was dead also, and buried for a time, but afterward revived. Being but a youth, he invented and taught the planting and dressing of Vines, the making also, and use of wine, for which becoming famous and renowned, he subjugated the World even to the uttermost bounds of *India*. He rode in a Chariot drawn with *Tygers*. There danced about him certain deformed hobgoblins called *Coball*, *Acrasus*, & others, yea even the *Muses* also were some of his followers. He took to wife *Ariadne*, forsaken and left by *Theseus*. The tree sacred unto him was the *Ivy*. He was held the inventor

inventor and institutor of Sacrifices, and Ceremonies, and full of corruption and cruelty. He had power to strike men with fury or madness; for it is reported, that at the celebration of his Orgies, two famous worthies, *Pentheus* and *Orpheus* were torn in pieces by certain frantick women, the one because he got upon a tree to behold their ceremonies in these sacrifices, the other for making melody with his harp. And for his gets, they are in manner the same with *Jupiters*.

There is such excellent morality coucht in this Fable, as that Morall philosophy affords not better: for under the person of *Bacchus* is described the nature of affection, passion, or perturbation, the mother of which (though never so hurtfull) is nothing else but the object of apparent good in the eyes of Appetite. And it is always conceived in an unlawfull desire rashly propounded and obtained, before well understood and considered; and when it begins to grow, the Mother of it, which is the desire of apparent good by too much fervency, is destroyed and perisheth: Nevertheless (whilst yet it is an imperfect *Embryo*) it is nourished & preserved in the humane soul, (which is as it were a father unto it, and represented by *Jupiter*) but

but especially in the inferiour part thereof, as in a thigh, where also it causeth so much trouble and vexation, as that good determinations and actions are much hindred and lamed thereby, and when it comes to be confirmed by consent and habite, and breaks out, as it were, into act, it remains yet a while, with *Proserpina* as with a Nurse, that is, it seeks corners and secret places, and as it were, caves under ground, untill (the reins of shame and fear being laid aside in a pampered audaciousnesse) it either takes the pretext of some vertue, or becomes altogether impudent and shamelesse. And it is most true, that every vehement passion is of a doubtfull sex, as being masculine in the first motion, but feminine in prosecution.

It is an excellent fiction that of *Bacchus*: his reviving: for passions do sometimes seem to be in a dead sleep, and as it were utterly extinct, but we should not think them to be so indeed, no, though they lay, as it were, in their grave; for, let there be but matter and opportunitie offered, and you shall see them quickly to revive again.

The invention of Wine is wittily ascribed unto him; every affection being ingenious and skilfull in finding out, that which brings

brings nourishment unto it; And indeed of all things known to men, Wine is most powerfull and efficacious to excite and kindle passions of what kind soever, as being in a manner common Nurse to them all.

Again his conquering of Nations, and undertaking infinite expeditions is an elegant device; for desire never rests content with what it hath, but with an infinite and unsatiable appetite till covets and gapes after more.

His Chariot also is well said to be drawn by *Tygers*; for as soon as any affection shall from going afoot, be advanc'd to ride in a Chariot, and shall captivate reason, and lead her in a triumph, it grows cruel, untamed, and fierce against whatsoever withstands or opposeth it.

It is worth the noting also, that those ridiculous hobgoblins are brought in, dancing about his Chariot; for every passion doth cause, in the eyes, face and gesture, certain undecent, and ill-seeming, apish, and deformed motions, so that they who in any kind of passion, as in anger, arrogancy or love, seem glorious and brave in their own eyes, do yet appear to others mis-shapen and ridiculous.

In that the *Muses* are said to be of his com-

company, it shews that there is no affection almost which is not soothed by some Art, wherein the indulgence of wits doth derogate from the glory of the Muses, who (when they ought to be the mistresses of life) are made the wayting-maids of affections.

Again, where *Bacchus* is said to have loved *Ariadne*, that was rejected by *Theseus*; it is an Allegory of special observation: for it is most certain, that passions alwaies cover and desire that which experience forsakes; and they all know (who have paid dear for serving and obeying their lusts) that whether it be honour, or riches, or delight, or glory, or knowledge, or any thing else which they seek after, yet are they but things cast off, and by divers men in all ages, after experience had, utterly rejected and loathed.

Neither is it without a mystery, that the *Ivie* was sacred to *Bacchus*: for the application holds, first, in that the *Ivie* remains green in winter. Secondly in that it sticks too, embraceth, and overtoppeth so many diverse bodies, as trees, walls, and edifices. Touching the first, every passion doth by resistance and reluctance, and as it were, by an *Antiphrasis* (like the *Ivie* of the cold of winter

winter grow fresh and lustie. And as for the other, every predominate affection doth again (like the *Ivie*) imbrace and limit all humane actions and determinations, adhering and cleaving fast unto them.

Neither is it a wonder, that superstitious rites and ceremonies were attributed unto *Bacchus*, seeing every giddie headed humor keeps in a manner Revel-rout in false religions: or that the cause of madness should be ascribed unto him, seeing every affection is by nature a short fury, which (if it grow vehement, and become habitual) concludes madnesse.

Concerning the rending and dismemb-  
ring of *Pentheus* and *Orpheus*, the parable is plain, for every prevalent affection is outrageous and severe and against curious inquiry, and wholesome and free admonition.

Lastly, that confusion of *Jupiter* and *Bacchus*, their persons may be well transferred to a parable, seeing noble and famous acts, and remarkable and glorious merits, do sometimes proceed from vertue, and well ordered reason, and magnanimity, and sometimes from a secret affection, and hidden passion, which are so dignified with the celebrity of fame and glory, that a man can hardly

hardly distinguish between the acts of *Bacchus*, and the gifts of *Jupiter*.

*ATALANTA, or Gail.*

**A** *Talanta*, who was reputed to excell in swiftnesse, would needs challenge *Hippomenes* at a match in running. The condition of the Price were these: That if *Hippomenes* won the race, he should espouse *Atalanta*; If he were out-run, that then he should forfeit his life. And in the opinion of all, the victorie was thought assured of *Atalanta's* side, being famous as she was for her matchlesse and unconquerable speed, where by she had been the bane of many. *Hippomenes* therefore be-thinks him, how to deceive her by a trick, and in that regard provides three golden apples or balls which he purposely carried about him. The race is begun, and *Atalanta* gets a good start before him. He seeing himself thus cast behind, being mindfull of his device, throws one of his golden balls before her, and yet not outright but somewhat of the one side, both to make her linger, and also to draw her out of the right course: she out of a womanish desire, (being thus enticed with the beauty of the golden apple) leaving her direct race, runs aside and stops to catch the ball; *Hippomenes* the



the while holds on his course, getting there by a great start, and leaves her behind him; But she by her own natural swiftnesse, recovers her lost time and gets before him again. But *Hirpomenes* still continues his sleight, and both the second and third times cast out his balls, those enticing delays; and so by craft and not by his activity wins the race and victory.

This Fable seems allegorically to demonstrate a notable conflict between Art and Nature: for Art (signified by *Atalanta*) in its work (if it be not letted and hindred) is far more swift than Nature, more speedy in pace, and sooner attains the end it aims at, which is manifest almost in every effect: As you may see in fruit-trees, whereof those that grow of a kernell are long ere they bear, but such as are grafted on a stock a great deal sooner. You may see it in Clay, which in the generation of stones, is long ere it become hard, but in the burning of Bricks, it very quickly effected. Also in morall passages you may observe that it is a long time ere (by the benefit of Nature) sorrow can be asswaged, and comfort attained, whereas *Philosophy* (which is, as it were, art of living) carries not the leisure of time, but doth it instantly, and out of hand;

hand ; And yet this prerogative and singular agility of Art is hindered by certain golden apples, to the infinite prejudice of humane proceedings : for there is not any one *Art* or *Science* which constantly preserves in a true and lawfull course, till it come to the proposed end or mark : but ever and anon makes stops, after good beginnings, leaves the race, and turns aside to profit and commodity, like *Atalanta*.

*Declinat cursus, aurumque valubile tollit.*

Who doth her course forsake,  
The rolling gold to take.

And therefore it is no wonder that Art hath not the power to conquer Nature, and by pact or law of conquest, to kill and destroy her ; but on the contrary, it falls out, that Art becomes subject to Nature, and yields the obedience, as of a wife to her husband.

PRO.

*PROMETHEUS, or the State  
of man.*

**T**HE Ancients deliver, that *Prometheus* made a man of Clay, mixt with certain parcels taken from divers animales, who studying to maintain this his work by Art, (that he might not be accounted a founder only, but a propagatour of humane kind) stole up to heaven with a bundle of twigs, which he kindled at the Chariot of the Sun, came down again, and communicated it with men: And yet they say, that notwithstanding this excellent work of his) he was requited with ingratitude, in a treacherous conspiracy: For they accused both him and his invention to *Jupiter*, which was not so taken as was meet it should, for the information was pleasing to *Jupiter* and all the gods. And therefore in a merry mood, granted unto men, not only the use of fire, but perpetual youth also, a boone most acceptable, and desirable. They being, as it were, overjoyed, did foolishly lay this gift of the gods upon the back of an Ass, who being wonderfully oppressed with thirst, and near a fountain, was told by a Serpent (which had the custody thereof) that he should not drink,

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drink, unless he would promise to give him the burden that was on his back. The silly Asse accepted the condition, and so the restoration of youth (sold for a draught of water) past from Men to Serpents. But *Prometheus* full of malice, being reconciled unto men, after they were frustrated of their gift, but in a chafe yet with *Jupiter*, feared not to use deceit in Sacrifice: for having killed two Bulls, and in one of their hides wrapt up the flesh and fat of them both, and in the other only the bones, with a great shew of religious devotion, gave *Jupiter* his choise, who (detesting his fraud and hypocrisie, but taking an occasion of revenge) chose that which was stopt with bones, and so turning to revenge (when he saw that the insolency of *Prometheus* would not be repressed, but by laying some grievous affliction upon mankind, in the forming of which, he so much bragged and boasted) commanded *Vulcan*, to frame a goodly beautifull woman, which being done, every one of the gods bestowed a gift on her; whereupon she was called *Pandora*. To this woman they gave in her hand, a goodlie Box, full of all miseries and calamities, only in the bot-tome of it, they put *Hope*; with this Box she comes first to *Prometheus*, thinking to catch him,

him, if peradventure, he should accept it at her hands, and so open it: which he nevertheless, with good providence and foresight refused. Whereupon she goes to *Epimetheus* ( who, though brother to *Prometheus*, yet was of a much differing disposition ) and offers this Box unto him, who, without delay took it, and rashly opened it; but when he saw that all kind of miseries came fluttering about his ears, being wise too late, with great speed and earnest endeavour, clapt on the cover, and so with much ado retained *Hope* sitting alone in the bottome. At last *Jupiter* laying many and grievous crimes to *Prometheus* his charge ( as that he had stoln fire from heaven, that in contempt of his Majestie, he sacrificed a Bulls hide stufte with bones, that he scornfully rejected his gift, and besides all this that he offered violence to *Pallas* ) cast him into chains, and doom'd him to perpetual torment: and by *Jupiters* command, was brought to the mountain *Caucasus*, and there bound fast to a pillar that he could not stir; there came an Eagle also, that every day fate tyring upon his liver, and wasted it, but as much as was eaten in the day, grew again in the night, that matter for torment to work upon might never decay. But yet they say there was an end of this punishment:

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nishment : for *Hercules* crossing the Ocean in a Cup, which the Sun gave him, came to *Caucasus*, and set *Prometheus* at libertie, by shooting the Eagle with an arrow. Moreover in some nations there were instituted in the honour of *Prometheus*, certain games of Lampbearers, in which they that strived for the prize, were wont to carrie torches lighted ; which, who so suffered to go out, yielded the place and victorie to those that followed, and so cast back themselves, so that whosoever came first to the marke with his torch burning, got the prize.

This Fable demonstrates and presseth many true and grave speculations, wherein some things have been heretofore well noted, others not so much astoucht.

*Prometheus* doth clearly and elegantly signifie *Providence* : For in the Universality of Nature, the Fabrick and constitution of Man only was by the Ancients pickt out and chosen, and attributed unto *Providence*, as a peculiar work. The reason of it seems to be, not only in that the nature of man is capable of a mind and understanding, which is the seat of *Providence*, and therefore it would seem strange and incredible that the reason and mind should

so proceed and flow from dumb and deaf principles, as that it should necessarily be concluded, the soul of man to be indued with providence, not without the example, intention, & stamp of a greater providence. But this also is chiefly propounded, that man is as it were, the center of the world, in respect of small causes, so that if man were not in nature, all things would seem to stray and wander without purpose, and like scattered branches (as they say) without inclination to their end: for all things attend on man, and he makes use of, and gathers fruit from all creatures: for the revolutions and periods of Stars make both for the distinctions of times, and the distribution of the worlds light. Meteors also are referred to Presages of tempests; and winds are ordained, as well for Navigation, as for turning of Mills, and other engines: and plants, and animals of what kind soever, are usefull either for mens houses, and places of shelter, or for rayment, or for food, or medicine, or for ease of labour, or in a word, for delight and solace; so that all things seem to work, not for themselves, but for man.

Neither is it added without consideration that certain particles were taken from diverse



verse living creatures, and mixt and tempered with that clayie masse, because it is most true that of all things comprehended within the compasse of the universe, Man is a thing most mixt and compounded; inso-much that he was well termed by the Ancients, A little World : for although the *Chymicks* do, with too much curiosity, take and rest the elegancie of this word (*Microcosme*) to the letter, contending to find in man all mineralls, all vegetables and the rest; or any thing that holds proportion, with them, yet this proposition remains sound and whole, that the body of man, of all material beings is found to be most compounded, & most organical, whereby it is indued and furnished with most admirable virtues and faculties. And as for simple bodies, their powers are not many, though certain and violent, as existing without being weakned, diminished or stented by mixture : for the multiplicity and excellencie of operation have their residence in mixture and composition, and yet nevertheless, man in his originals, seems to be a thing unarmed, and naked, and unable to help it self, as needing the aid of many things; therefore *Prometheus* made hast to find out fire, which suppeditates and yields comfort

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comfort and help, in a manner, to all humane wants and necessities : so that if the soul be the form of forms, and if the hand be the instrument of instruments ; fire deserves well to be called the succour of succours, or the help of helps, which infinite ways affords aid and assistance to all labours and mechanical Arts, and to the sciences themselves.

The manner of stealing this fire is aptly described, even from the nature of things : It was, they say, by a bundle of twigs held to touch the Chariot of the Sun : for twigs are used in giving blowes or stripes, to signify clearly, that fire is engendred by the violent percussio, and mutual collision of bodies, by which their material substances are attenuated and set in motion, and prepared to receive the heat or influence of the heavenly bodies, and so in a clandestine manner, and as it were, by stealth, may be said to take and snatch fire from the Chariot of the Sun.

There follows next a remarkable part of the parable, that men instead of gratulation, and thanksgiving, were angry, and expostulated the matter with *Prometheus*, inasmuch that they accused both him and his invention unto *Jupiter*, which was so acceptable

unto him, that he augmented their former commodities with a new bounty. Seems it not strange, that ingratitude towards the author of a benefit (a vice, that in a manner, contains all other vices) should find such approbation and reward? No, it seems to be otherwise: for the meaning of the Allegory is this, that mens outcries upon the defects of Nature and Art, proceed from an excellent disposition of the mind, and turn to their good, whereas the silencing of them is hateful to the gods, and redounds not so much to their profit: For they that infinitely extoll humane nature, or the knowledge they possesse, breaking out into a prodigal admiration of that they have and enjoy, adoring also those sciences they professe, would have them be accounted perfect; they do first of all shew little reverence to the divine nature, by equalizing, in a manner, their own defects with Gods perfection; Again they are wonderfull injurious to men, by imagining they have attained the highest step of knowledge (resting themselves contented) seek no further. On the contrary, such as bring Nature and Art to the barr with accusations and bills of complaint against them, are indeed of more true and moderate judgments: for they are ever in action, seeking  
 alwaies

alwaies to find out new inventions. Which makes me much to wonder at the foolish & inconsiderate dispositions of some men, who ( making themselves bond-slaves to the arrogancy of a few ) have the philosophy of the Peripateticks ( containing only a portion of Gracian wisdom, and that but a small one neither ) in so great esteem, that they hold it, not only an unprofitable, but a suspicious, and almost hainous thing, to lay any imputation of imperfection upon it. I approve rather of *Empedocles* his opinion ( who like a mad man, and of *Democritus* his judgment, who with great moderation complained how that all things were involved in a mist ) that we knew nothing, that we discerned nothing, that truth was drown'd in the depths of obscurity, and that false things were wonderfully joyned and intermixt with true ( as for the new Academie that exceeded all measure ) than of the confident and pronounciative school of *Aristotle*. Let men therefore be admonished, that by acknowledging the imperfection of Nature and Art, they are gratefull to the gods, and shall thereby obtain new benefits and greater favours at their bountifull hands, and the accusation of *Prometheus* their Author and Master, ( though bitter and vehement ) will con-

duce more to their profit, than to be effuse in the congratulation of his invention : for in a word, the opinion of having enough, is to be accounted one of the greatest causes of having too little.

Now as touching the kind of gift which men are said to have received in reward of their accusation ( to wit, an ever fading flower of youth ) it is to shew, that the Ancients seemed not to despair of attaining the skill by means and medicines, to put off old age, and to prolong life, but this to be numbered rather among such things as ( having been once happily attained unto ) are now through mens negligence and carelessness, utterly perished and lost ; than among such as have been alwaies denied and never granted : for they signifie and shew, that by affording the true use of Fire, and by a good and stern accusation and conviction of the errours of Art, the divine bounty is not wanting unto men in the obtaining of such gifts, but men are wanting to themselves in laying this gift of the gods upon the back of a silly and slow-paced Ass, which may seem to be Experience, a stupid thing, and full of delay: from whose leisurely and snail-like pace, proceeds that complaint of Lifes brevity, and Arts length. And to say the truth,

truth, I am of this opinion, that those two faculties *Dogmatical* and *Emperical*, are not as yet well joyned and coupled together, but as new gifts of the gods imposed either upon philosophical abstractions, as upon a flying bird, or upon slow and dull experience, as upon an Ass. And yet methinks, I would not entertain an ill conceit of this ass, if it meet not for the accidents of travell and thirst: for I am perswaded, that who so constantly goes on, by the conduct of experience, as by a certain rule and method, and not covers to meet with such experiments by the way, as conduce either to gain or ostentation (to obtain which, he must be fain to lay down and sell this burthen) may prove no unfit Porter to bear this new addition of devine munificence.

Now, in that this gift is said to passe from men to serpents, it may seem to be added to the Fable for ornaments-sake in a manner, unlesse it were inserted to shame men, that having the use of that celestial Fire, and of so many Arts, are not able to get unto themselves such things as Nature itself bestows upon many other creatures.

But that sudden reconciliation of men to *Prometheus*, after they were frustrated of their hopes, contains a profitable and wise

note, shewing the levity and temerity of men in new experiments : for if they have not present successe answerable to their expectation, with too sudden hast desist from that they began, and with precipitancy returning to their former experiments are reconciled to them again.

The state of man in respect of Arts, and such things as concern the intellect, being now described, the parable passeth to Religion : For after the planting of Arts follows the setting of divine principles, which hypocrisie hath overspread and polluted. By that twofold Sacrifice therefore is elegantly shadowed out, the persons of a true religious man and an hypocrite. In the one is contained fatnesse, which (by reason of the inflammation and fumes thereof) is called the portion of God, by which his affection and zeal ( tending to Gods glory, and ascending towards heaven ) is signified. In him also are contained the bowels of charity, and in him is found that good and wholesome flesh. Whereas in the other, there is nothing but dry and naked bones, which neverthelesse do stufte up the hide, and make it appear like a fair and goodly Sacrifice : By this may well be meant those externall and vain rites, and emptie Ceremonies by which men do  
oppress



oppreſſe and fill up the ſincere worſhip of God, things compoſed rather for oſtentation than any way conducing to true piety. Neither do they hold it ſufficient to offer ſuch mock ſacrifices unto God, except they alſo lay them before him, as if he had choſen and beſpoke them. Certainly the Prophet in the perſon of God, doth thus expoſtulate concerning this choice. *Eſai. 58. 5. Num tantum hoc eſt illud jejunium, quod ELEGI, ut homo animam ſuam in diem unum affligat, & caput inſtar juncea demitat?* Is it ſuch a Faſt, that I have choſen, that a man ſhould afflict his ſoul for a day, and to bow down his head like a Bull-ruſh.

HAVING now toucht the ſtate of Religion, the parable converts it ſelf to the manners and conditions of humane life. And it is a common, but apt interpretation, by *Pandora* to be meant pleaſure and voluptuouſneſſe, which (when the civill life is pampered with too much Art, and culture, and ſuperfluity) is ingendred as it were, by the efficacy of fire, and therefore the work of voluptuouſneſſe is attributed unto *Vulcan*, who alſo himſelf doth repreſent Fire. From this do infinite miſeries, together with too late repentance, proceed and overflow the minds, and bodies, & fortunes of men, and that not only in

F<sup>o</sup>4

reſpect

respect of particular estates, but even over Kingdoms and Common-wealths: for from this fountain have wars, tumults and tyrannies derived their original.

But it would be worth the labour, to consider how elegantly and proportionably this Fable doth delineate two conditions, or (as I may say) two tables or examples of humane life, under the persons of *Prometheus* and *Epimetheus*: for they that are of *Epimetheus* his sect, are improvident, nor foreseeing what may come to passe hereafter, esteeming that best which seems most sweet for the present; whence it happens that they are overtaken with many miseries, difficulties, and calamities, and so lead their lives almost in perpetual affliction, but yet notwithstanding they please their fancy, and out of ignorance of the passages of things, do entertain many vain hopes in their mind, whereby they sometimes (as with sweet dreams) solace themselves, and sweeten the miseries of their life. But they that are *Prometheus* his Scholars, are men endued with prudence, foreseeing things to come warily, shunning and avoiding many evils and misfortunes. But to these their good properties they have this also annexed, that they deprive themselves, and defraud their *Genius* of many  
lawfull

lawfull pleasures and divers recreations, and ( which is worfe ) they vex and torment themselves with cares and troubles, and intestine fears: For being chained to the pillar of necessity, they are afflicted with innumerable cogitations (wich because they are very swift, may be fitly compared to an Eagle ) and those griping, and as it were, gnawing and devouring the liver, unlesse sometimes as it were by night, it may be they get a little recreation and ease of mind, but so, as that they are again suddenly assaulted with fresh anxieties and fears.

Therefore this benefit happens to but a very few of either condition, that they should retain the commodities of Providence, and free themselves from the miseries of care and perturbation; neither indeed can any attain unto it, but by the assistance of *Hercules*, that is, fortitude and constancie of mind, which is prepared for every event, & armed in all fortunes, foreseeing without fear, enjoying without loathing, and suffering without impatience. It is worth the noting also, that this vertue was not natural to *Prometheus*, but adventitial and from the indulgence of another: for no in-bred and natural fortitude is able to encounter with these miseries. Moreover this vertue was received

and brought unto him from the remotest part of the *Ocean*, and from the Sun, that is, from wisdom as from the Sun; and from the meditation of inconstancy, or of the waters of humane life, as from the sailing upon the *Ocean*; which two, *Virgil* hath well conjoyned in these verses:

*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere  
causas:*

*Quique metus omnes, & inexorabile  
fatum*

*Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Ache-  
rontis avari.*

Happie is he that knows the cause of things,

And that with dauntless courage treads upon

All fear and Fates, relentlesse threatenings,

And greedy throat of roaring Acheron.

Moreover, it is elegantly added for the consolation and confirmation of mens minds, that this noble *Hero* crost the *Ocean* in a Cup or Pan, lest peradventure, they might too much fear that the straits & frail

tie of their nature will not be capable of this fortitude and constancy. Of which very thing *Seneca* well conceived when he said, *Magnū est habere simul fragilitatem hominis, & securitatem Dei.* It is a great matter for humane frailty and divine security to be one and the self-same time, in one and the self-same Subject.

But now we are to step back a little again to that, which by premeditation we cast over, lest a breach should be made in those things that were so linckt together. That therefore which I could touch here is that last crime imputed to *Prometheus*, about seeking to bereave *Minerva* of her virginity : for questionlesse, it was this hainous offence that brought that punishment of devouring his liver upon him; which is nothing else but to shew, that when we are puffed up with too much learning and science, they go about oftentimes to make even divine Oracles subject to sense and reason; whence most certainly follows a continual distraction and restless gripping of the mind; we must therefore with a sober & humble judgement distinguish between humanity and divinity, and between the Oracles of sense, and the mysteries of faith, unlesse an heretical religion,

sion, and a commnetitious philosophy be pleasing unto us.

Lastly, It remains that we say something of the games of *Promethews* performed with burning torches, which again hath reference to Arts and Sciences, as that fire, in whose memory and celebration, these games were instituted, and it contains in it a most wise admonition, that the perfection of sciences is to be expected from succession, not from the nimbleness and promptness of one only author: for they that are nimblest in course & strongest in contention, yet happily have not the luck to keep fire still in their torch; seeing it maybe as well extinguished by running too fast, as by going too slow. And this running & contending with lamps, seems long since to be intermitted, seeing all sciences seem even now to flourish most in their first Authors, *Aristotle, Galen, Euclid, and Ptoleme*, succession having neither effected, nor almost attempted any great matter. It were therefore to be wished, that these games in in honour of *Promethews* or humane nature were again restored, and that matters should receive success by combate and emulation, and not hang upon any one mans sparkling and shaking torch. Men therefore are to be admonished to rouse up their spirits, and  
try

try their strengths and turns, and not refer all to the opinions and brains of a few.

And thus have I delivered that which I thought good to observe out of this so well known and common Fable; and yet I will not deny but that there may be some things in it, which have an admirable consent with the mysteries of Christian Religion, and especially that sayling of *Hercules* in a Cup (to set *Promethens* at liberty) seems to represent an image of the divine Word, coming in flesh as in a frail Vessell to redeem *Man* from the slavery of *Hell*. But I have interdicted my pen all liberty in this kind, lest I should use strange fire at the Altar of the Lord.

*SCYLLA and ICARUS; or the  
Middle-way.*

**M**ediocrity or the *Middle-way* is most commended in morall actions, in contemplative sciences not so celebrated, though no less profitable and commodious: But in political employments to be used with great heed and judgement. The Ancients by the way prescribed to *Icarus*, noted the mediocrity of manners: and by the way between *Scylla* and *Charibdis* (so famous for



for difficulty and danger ) the mediocrity of  
of intellectual operations.

*Icarus* being to cross the Sea by flight, was commanded by his Father that he should flie neither too high nor too low, for his wings, being joyned with wax, if he should mount too high, it was to be feared lest the wax would melt by the heat of the Sun; and if too low, lest the mistie vapours of the Sea would make it lesse tenacious: But he in a youthfull jollity foring too high fell down headlong and perished in the water.

The parable is easie and vulgar: for the way of verue lies in a direct path between excesse and defect. Neither is it a wonder that *Icarus* perished by Excesse, seeing that Excesse for the most part, is the peculiar fault of youth, as Defect is of age, and yet of two evill and hurtfull wayes, youth commonly makes choise of the better, defect being always accounted worst: for whereas excess contains some sparks of magnanimity, and like a bird claims kindred of the Heavens, Defect only like a base worm crawls upon the earth. Excellently therefore said *Heraclitus*, *Lumen siccum, optima anima*. A drie light is the best soul: for if the soul contract moisture from the earth it becomes degenerate altogether. Again on the other side, there  
must

must be moderation used, that this light be subtilized by this laudable ficcicy, and not destroyed by too much fervency. And thus much every man for the most part knowes.

Now they that would sail between *Scylla* and *Charibdis* must be furnished, as well with the skill, as prosperous success in Navigation: for if their ships fall into *Scylla* they are split on the Rocks; if into *Charibdis* they are swallowed up of a Gulf.

The Morall of this parable (which we will but briefly touch, although it contain matter of infinite contemplation) seems to be this, that in every Art and Science, and so in their Rules and Axiomes, there be a mean observed between the Rocks of distinctions, and the gulfs of Universalities, which two are famous for the wrack both of Wits and Arts.

*S P H Y N X, or Science.*

**T**HEY say that *Sphinx* was a monster of diverse forms, as having the face and voyce of a Virgin, the wings of a Bird, and the talents of a Grifpin. His abode was in a mountain near the City of *Thebes*, he kept also the high-waies, and used to lye in a bush

bush for travellers, and so to surprize them : to whom ( being in his power ) he propounded certain dark and intricate Riddles, which were were thought to have been given and received of the Muses. Now if these miserable captives were not able instantly to resolve and interpret them in the midst of their difficulties and doubts, she would rend and tear them apieces. The Countrey groaning a long time under this calamity, the *Thebanes* at last propounded the Kingdome as a reward unto him that could interpret the Riddles of *Sphynx*, there being no other way to destroy her. Whereupon *Oedipus* ( a man of piercing and deep judgement, but maimed and lame by reason of holes bored in his feet ) moved with the hope of so great a reward, accepted the condition, and determined to put it to the hazard, and so with an undaunted and bold spirit, presented himself before the Monster, who asking him what creature that was, which after his birth went first upon four feet, next upon two, then upon three, and lastly upon four feet again, answered forthwith that it was Man, which in his infancy, immediately after birth crawls upon all four, scarce ventring to creep, and not long after stands upright upon two feet; then growing old he leans upon

a staffe wherewith he supports himself, so that he may seem to have three feet, and at last in decreped years, his strength failing him, he falls groveling again upon four, and lies bed-rid. Having therefore by this true answer gotten the victory, he instantly slew this *Sphinx*, and ( laying her body upon an asse ) leads it, as it were, in triumph : and so ( according to the condition ) was created King of the *Thebans*.

This Fable contains in it no lesse wisdom than elegancy, and it seems to point at Science, especially that which is joyned with practise, for Science may not absurdly be termed a monster, as being by the ignorant and rude multitude alwaies held in admiration.

It is diverse in shape and figure by reason of the infinite variety of subjects, wherein it is conversant. A maiden face and voyce is attributed unto for its gracious countenance and volubility of tongue. Wings are added because Sciences and their inventions do passe and fly from one to another, as it were in a moment, seeing that the communication of Science is as the kindling of one light at another. Elegantly also it is fained to have sharp and hooked talents, because the Axiomes and arguments of Science do so fasten

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fasten upon the mind, and so strongly apprehend and hold it, as that it stir or evade, which is noted also by the divine Philosopher. Eccl. 12. 11. *Verba sapientum* (saith he) *sunt tanquam aculei & veluti clavi in altum defixi.* The words of the wise are like goads, and like nails driven fast in.

Moreover, all Science seems to be placed in steep and high mountains: as being thought to be a lofty and high thing, looking down upon ignorance with a scornfull eye. It may be observed and seen also a great way and far in compass, as things set on the tops of mountains.

- Furthermore, Science may well be famed to beset the high wayes, because which way soever we turn in this progress and pilgrimage of humane life, we meet with some matter or occasion offered for contemplation.

*Sphinx* is said to have received from the Muses divers difficult questions and riddles, and to propound them unto men, which remaining with the muses are free (it may be) from savage cruelty: for so long as there is no other end of studie and meditation, than to know; the understanding is not racked and imprisoned, but enjoys freedom and liberty

berry, and even in doubts and varietie finds a kind of pleasure and delectation: but when once these *Enigmas* are delivered by the Muses to *Sphinx*, that is, to practise, so that it be solicited and urged by action, and election and determination; then they begin to be troublesome and raging; and unless they be resolved and expedited, they do wonderfully torment and vex the minds of men, distracting, and in a manner rending them into sundry parts.

Moreover there is alwaies a twofold condition propounded with *Sphinx* her *Enigmas*; To him that doth not expound them, distraction of mind, and to him that doth, a kingdome: for he that knows that which he sought to know, hath attained the end he aimed at, and every artificer also commands over his work.

Of *Sphinx* her Riddles, they are generally two kinds; some concerning the nature of things, others touching the nature of Man. So also there are two kinds of Emperies, as rewards to those that resolve them: the one over nature, the other over men; for the proper and chief end of true naturall philosophy is to command and sway over natural beings, as bodies, medicines, mechanical works, and infinite other things; although the

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school ( being content with such things as are offered, and priding it self with speeches ) doth neglect realities and works, treading them as it were under foot. But that *Ænigma* propounded to *Oedipus* ( by means of which he obtained the *Theban* Empire ) belonged to the nature of man : For whosoever doth thoroughly consider the nature of man, may be in a manner the contriver of his own fortune, and is born to command, which is well spoken of the Roman Arts:

*Tu regere imperio populos, Romanæ me-  
mento.*

*Hæ tibi erant artes.*—

Roman remember that with Scepters  
awe

Thy Realms thou rule. These Arts let  
be thy Law.

It was therefore very apposit, that *Augustus Cæsar* ( whether by premeditation or by a chance ) bare a *Sphinx* in his Signet : for he ( if ever any ) was famous not only in political government, but in all the course of his life ; he happily discovered many new *Ænigmas* concerning the nature of Man, which



which if he had not done with dexterity and promptness, he had oftentimes fallen into eminent danger and destruction.

Moreover, It is added in the Fable, that the body of *Sphinx* when she was overcome was laid upon an ass: which indeed is an elegant fiction; seeing there is nothing so acute and abstruse, but (being well understood and divulged) may be apprehended by a slow capacity.

Neither is it to be omitted, that *Sphinx* was overcome by a man lame in his feet: for when men are too swift of foot and too speedy of pace in hasting to *Sphinx* her *Aenigmas*, it comes to passe that (she getting the upper hand) their wits and minds are rather distracted by disputations, than that ever they come to command by works and effects.

*PROSERPINA, or Spirit.*

**P**LUTO they say, being made king of the infernal dominions (by that memorable division) was in despair of ever attaining any one of the superior goddesses in marriage, especially if he should venter to court them either with words or with any amorous

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amorous behaviour, so that of necessitie he was to lay some plot to get one of them by rapine; taking therefore the benefit of opportunity, he caught up *Proserpina* (the daughter of *Ceres*, a beautifull Virgin) as she was gathering *Narcissus* flowers in the meadows of *Sicily*, and carried her away with him in his Coach to the *Subterranean* dominion, where she was welcomed with such respect, as that she was stiled the Lady of *Dis*. But *Ceres* her mother, when in no place she should find this her only beloved daughter, in a sorrowfull humor and distracted beyond measure, went compassing the whole earth with a burning torch in her hand, to seek and recover this her lost child. But when she saw that all was in vain, supposing peradventure that she was carried to Hell, she importuned *Jupiter* with many tears and lamentations, that she might be restored unto her again, & at length prevailed thus far, That if she had tasted of nothing in hell she should have leave to bring her from thence. Which condition was as good as a deniall to her petition, *Proserpina* having already eated three grains of a *Pomegranate*. And yet for all this, *Ceres* gave not over her suite, but fell to prayers and moans afresh. Wherefore it was at last granted, that (the year

year being divided) *Proserpina* should by alternate courses, remain one six months with her husband, and other six months with her mother. Not long after this, *Theseus* and *Perithous* in an over-hardy adventure attempted to fetch her from *Pluto's* bed, who being weary with travell, and sitting down upon a stone in hell to rest themselves, had not the power to rise again, but sate there for ever. *Proserpina* therefore remained Queen of hell, in whose honour there was this great priviledge granted, That although it were enacted that none that went down to Hell should have the power ever to return from thence, yet was this singular exception annexed to this law, that if any presented *Proserpina* with a golden bough, it should be lawfull for him to go and come at his pleasure. Now there was but one only such a bough in a spacious and shady grove, which was not a plant neither of it self, but budded from a tree, of another kind, like a rope of Gum, which being pluckt off another would instantly spring out.

This Fable seems to pertain to nature, and to dive into that rich and plentiful efficacy, and variety of subalternall creatures, from whom what soever we have is derived, and to them doth again return.

By

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By *P oserpina* the Ancients meant that æthereal spirit which (being separated from the upper globe) is shut up and detained under the earth (represented by *Pluto*) which the Poet well expressed thus:

*Sive recens tellus, seductaque nuper  
ab alto.*

*Æthere, cognati retinebat semina  
cæli.*

Whither the youngling Tellus (that  
of late

Was from the high-rear'd Æther  
separate)

Did yet contain her teeming womb  
within

The living seeds of Heaven, her near-  
rest kin.

This spirit is fained to be rapt by the Earth, because nothing can with hold it when it hath time and leasure to escape. It is therefore caught and stayed by a sudden contraction, no otherwise than if a man should go about to mixe air with water, which can be done by no means, but by a speedy and rapid agitation, as may be seen in froth, where in the air is rapt by the water.

Nei-

Neither is it inelegantly added that *Proserpina* was wrapt as she was gathering *Narcissus* Flowers in the valleys, because *Narcissus* hath his name from slowness or stupidity: for indeed then is this Spirit most prepared and fitted to be snatcht by terrestrial matter, when it begins to be coagulated, and become as it were slow.

Rightly is *Proserpina* honored more than any of the other gods bed-fellows, in being stiled the Lady of *Dis*, because this Spirit doth rule and sway all things in those lower Regions, *Pluto* abiding stupid and ignorant,

This Spirit the power celestial ( shadowed by *Ceres* ) strives with infinite sedulity to recover and get again: for that brand or burning torch of *Ether* ( which *Ceres* carried in her hand ) doth doubtless signifie the Sun, which enlightheth the whole circuit of the Earth, and would be of greatest moment to recover *Proserpina*, if possibly it might be.

But *Proserpina* abides still, the reason of which is accurately and excellently propounded in the conditions between *Jupiter* and *Ceres*: for first it is most certain there are two waies to keep Spirit in solid and terrestrial Matter: the one by consipation and obstruction, which is meer imprisonment

and constraint; the other by administration of proportionable nutriment, which it receives willingly and of its own accord: for after that the included Spirit begins to feed and nourish it self, it makes no hast to be gone, but is, as it were, linckt to its Earth: And this is pointed at by *Proserpina* her eating of a Pomegranate; which if she had not done, she had long since been recovered by *Ceres* with her torch, compassing the Earth. Now as concerning that spirit which is in Mettals and minerals, it is chiefly perchance restrained by the solidity of Mass: but that which is in Plants and Animals<sup>s</sup>, inhabites a porous body, and hath open passage to be gone in a manner as it lists, were it not that it willingly abides of its own accord, by reason of the relish it finds in its entertainment. The second condition concerning the six months custome, it is no other than an elegant description of the division of the year, seeing this spirit mixt with the earth appears above ground in vegetable bodies during the summer months, and in the winter sinks down again.

Now as concerning *Theſeus* and *Perithous* and their attempt to bring *Proserpina* quite away; the meaning of it is, that it often times comes to pass, that some more  
subtill

suball spirits descending with divers bodies to the Earth, never come to suck of any subaltern spirit, whereby to unite it unto them, and so to bring it away. But on the contrary are coagulated themselves and never rise more, that *Proserpina* should be by that means augmented with inhabitants and dominion.

All that we can say concerning that sprig of gold is hardly able to defend us from the violence of the *Chymicks*, if in this regard they set upon us, seeing they promise by that their *Elixar* to effect golden mountains, and the restoring of natural bodies, as it were, from the portall of Hell. But concerning *Chymistry*, and those perpetuall tutors for that philosophicall *Elixar*, we know certainly that their *Theory* is without grounds, & we suspect that their practice also is without certain reward. And therefore (omitting these) of this last part of the parable, this is my opinion. I am induced to believe by many figures of the Ancients, that the conservation and restauration of natural bodies in some sort was not esteemed by them as a thing impossible to be attained, but as a thing obscure and full of difficulties, and so they seem to intimate in this place, when they report that this one only sprig was found a-



mong infinite other trees in a huge and thick wood, which they fained to be of gold, because gold is the badge of perpetuity, and to be artificially as it were inserted, because this effect is to be rather hoped for from Art, than from any Medicine, or simple or natural means.

*METIS, or Counsell.*

**T**HE ancient Poets report that *Jupiter* took *Metis* to wife, whose name doth plainly signifie Counsell, and that she by him conceived. Which when he found, not tarrying the time of her deliverance, devours both her and that which she went withall, by which means *Jupiter* himself became with child, and was delivered of a wondrous birth; for out of his head or brain came forth *Pallas* armed.

The sense of this Fable ( which at first apprehension may seem monstrous and absurd ) contains in it a secret of state, to wit, with what policy Kings are wont to carry themselves towards their Counsellors, whereby they may not only preserve their authority and Majesty free and entire, but also that it may be the more extolled and dignified of the people : For Kings being as it we're

were tyed and coupled in a Nuptial bond to their Counsellors, do truly conceive that communicating with them about the affairs of greatest importance, do yet detract nothing from their own Majesty. But when any matter comes to be censured or decreed (which is a bribe) there do they confine and restrain the liberty of their Counsellors; lest that which is done should seem to be hatcht by their wisdom and judgement. So as at last Kings (except it be in such matters as are distastfull and maligne, which they alwaies will be sure to put off from themselves) do assume the honour and praise of all matters that are ruminated in Counsell, and as it were, formed in the womb, whereby the resolution and execution (which because it proceeds from power, and implies necessity, is elegantly shadowed under the figure of *Pallas* armed) shall seem to proceed wholly from themselves. Neither sufficeth it that it is done by the authoritie of the King by his meer will and free applause, except withall, this be added and appropriated as to issue out of his own head or brain, intimating, that out of his own judgement, wisdom and ordinance it was only invented and derived.

*The SYRENES, or Pleasures.*

**T**HE Fable of the *Syrenes* seems rightly to have been applied to the pernicious allurements of pleasure, but in a very vulgar and grosse manner. And therefore to me it appears, that the Wisdom of the Ancients have with a farther reach or insight strain'd deeper matter out of them, nor unlike to Grapes ill prest, from which though some liquor were drawn, yet the best was left behind. These *Syrenes* are said to be the daughters of *Achelous* and *Trepfichores* one of the Muses. Who in their first being were winged, but after rashly entering into contention with the Muses, were by them vanquished, and deprived of their wings. Of whose pluckt out Feathers the Muses made themselves Coronets. So as ever since that time all the Muses have attired themselves with plumed heads, except *Terpsichoras* only, that was mother to the *Syrenes*. The habitation of the *Syrenes* was in certain pleasant Islands, from whence as soon as out of their watch-tower they discovered any ships approaching, with their sweet tunes they would first entice and stay them, and having them in their power would destroy them.

Neither

Neither was their song plain and single, but consisting of such variety of melodious tunes so fitting and delighting the ears that heard them, as that it ravished and betrayed all passengers. And so great was the mischiefs they did, that these Isles of the *Syrenes*, even as far off as man could ken them, appeared all over white with the bones of unburied Carcases. For the remedying of this misery a double means was at last found out, the one by *Ulysses*, the other by *Orpheus*. *Ulysses* (to make experiment of his device) caused all the ears of his companie to be stoppt with wax, and made himself to be bound to the main Mast, with special commandement to his Marriners not to be loosed, albeit himself should require them so to do. But *Orpheus* neglecting and disdainig to be so bound, with a shrill and sweet voice singing praises of the gods to his Harp, suppress the songs of the *Syrenes*, and so freed himself from their danger.

This Fable hath relation to mens manners, and contains in it a manifest and most excellent Parable : For pleasures do for the most part proceed out of the abundance and superfluity of all things, and also out of the delights & jovial contentments of the mind; the which are wont suddenly, as it were, with

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winged.

winged entisements to ravish and fast mortal men. But learning and education brings it so to pass, as that it restrains and bridles mans mind, making it so to consider the ends and events of things, as that it clips the wings of pleasure. And this was greatly to the honour and renown of the Muses: for after that by some examples it was made manifest that by the power of philosophy vain pleasures might grow contemptible; it presently grew to great esteem, as a thing that could raise and elevate the mind aloft that seemed to be base and fixed to the earth, make the cogitations of the men (which do ever recide the head) to be *Ætherial*, and as it were winged. But that the Mother of the *Syrenes* was left to her feet and without wings; that no doubt is no otherwise meant, than of light and superficial learning, appropriated and defined only to pleasures, as were those which *Petronius* devoted himself unto, after he had received his fatall sentence, and having his foot, as it were, upon the threshold of death sought to give himself all delightful contentments, insomuch as when he had caused consolatory letters to be sent him, he would peruse none of them (as *Tacitus* reports) that should give him courage and

constancy, but only read fantastical verses, such as these are :

*Vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus,  
Rumoresque Senium Severiorum  
Omnes unius astimemus Assis.*

My Lesbia, let us live and love ;  
Though wayward Dottards us reprove,  
Weigh their words light for our behove.

And this also :

*Fura Senes norint, & quid si fasque nefas-  
que  
Inquirant tristes, legumque examina ser-  
vent.*

Let doting Grandfires know the Law,  
And right and wrong observe with awe :  
Let them in that strict circle draw.

This kind of doctrine would easily per-  
swade to take these plumed Coronets from  
the Muses; and to restore the wings again to  
the Syrens. These Syrens are said to dwell in  
remote Isles, for that pleasures love privacy  
and retired places, shunning alwaies too  
much company of people. The Sirenes  
songs are so vulgarly understood, together  
G 5 with

with the deceits and danger of them, as that they need no exposition. But that of the bones appearing like white cliffs, and described a far off, hath more accuteness in it ; For thereby is signified, that albeit the examples of afflictions be manifest and eminent ; yet do they not sufficiently deter us from the wicked enticements of pleasures.

As for the remainder of this parable, though it be not over mystical, yet it is very grave and excellent : For in it are set out three remedies for this violent enticing mischief ; to wit, two from *Philosophy*, and one from Religion. The first means to shun these inordinate pleasures is, to withstand and resist them in their beginnings, and seriously to shun all occasions that are offered to debauch and entice the mind, which is signified in that stopping of the ears ; and that remedy is properly used by the meaner and baser sort of people, as it were, *Ulysses* followers or Mariners ; whereas more heroic and noble Spirits, may boldly converse even in the midst of these seducing pleasures, if with a resolved constancy they stand upon their guard, and fortifie their minds ; and so take greater contentment in the trial and experience of this their approved vertue ; learning rather thoroughly to under-  
stand



stand the follies and vanities of those pleasures by contemplation, than by submission. Which *Salomon* avouched of himself, when he reckoning up the multitude of those solaces and pleasures wherein he swam, doth conclude with this Sentence.

*Sapientia quoque perseveravit mecum.*  
Wisdom also continued with me.

Therefore these Heroes and Spirits of this excellent temper, even in the midst of these enticing pleasures, can shew themselves constant and invincible, and are able to support their own vertuous inclination, against all heady and forcible perswasions whatsoever; as by the example of *Ulysses* that so peremptorily interdicted all pestilent counsels and flatteries of his companions, as the most dangerous and pernicious poysons to captivate the mind. But of all other remedies in this case, that of *Orpheus* is most predominant: For they that chaunt and resound the praises of the Gods, confound and dissipate the voyces and incantations of the *Syrenes*; for divine meditations do not only in power subdue all sensual pleasures; but also far exceed them in sweetness and delight.

F I N I S.